THE ATHEIST VIEWPOINT

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Advisory Editor:
Madalyn Murray O'Hair

WHAT ON EARTH IS AN ATHEIST !

By

MADALYN MURRAY O'HAIR

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INTRODUCTION

ANYONE in America can be an Atheist—and a lot of people are. Anyone can be an Atheist, that is, if he keeps his mouth shut about what he believes, hiding it under a general classification of being a Protestant (meaning "I protest") and permitting the religious community of America to dominate exclusively in the cultural, political, educational, legal and civic matters of our nation.

If any Atheist speaks up for what he believes, *ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.* He is accused of everything with which a human being can be charged. *De minimus* he is a Communist, a child beater, a criminal of the lowest sort, who knows nothing of love, and who is lacking completely any understanding of beauty, and is incapable of "feeling" or emotional response.

This attack has been tolerated by the Atheist community. Hardly anyone stands up to say, "How now, Brown Cow-you can't say that about us." As a consequence, go to your library tomorrow and see if you can find any books in it about Atheism, written by Atheists. Even colleges and universities do not stock such items. The Library of Congress of the United States lists only thirty two books in respect to Atheism (in English) and of these, twenty six are refutations of Atheism. This is all that the Library of Congress has ever had in one hundred sixty nine years!

Atheists cannot purchase advertisements in newspapers, magazines (*The Saturday Review* refused to permit advertising of my own *Why I Am An Atheist*) or on television or radio.

I felt, after the Supreme Court case which removed the Bible and prayer from the public schools of America, in which my son and I were principle litigants, that it was necessary to let the people of America know what Atheists are. I had been man-handled in the American press. My public image was appalling and it did not get any better when I started a suit to see that the churches pay their fair share of the tax burden. Religion wields political and monetary influence in America and the good Christian fathers saw to it that I was painted in most heinous terms. At the time of the conclusion of the Bible/Prayer case, and since, I have been trying to interest any publisher in America to publish a first hand account of what went

on, and one hundred thirty two major American publishers, six English publishers and three Canadian publishers have refused me, They all say, "For a book to succeed, the reader must identify with the leading character, and no one can identify with you, Mrs. Murray, as a militant Atheist."

Finally I decided that it was ridiculous that we could not present the arguments for our side, and in 1965 I started legal procedures against twenty six radio stations and the Federal Communications Commission. I filed complaints against the twenty six radio stations with the F.C.C. for refusing to sell time to an Atheist, and then I sued the Federal Communications Commission for ruling that the radio stations need not sell the time. My suit failed because at a time when I should have been appealing it to a federal court, I was in jail because of persecutions brought by the religious community of America. The court would not take notice of my "disability to proceed," because of the rather horrible reprisals being taken against me for my participation in the Bible/Prayer case.

When all the jailings were over, and we had defeated the personal persecutions legally, we found ourselves settled in Austin, Texas. I AM NOT ABOUT TO GIVE UP THE FIGHT TO SEE THAT ATHEISM TAKES ITS STAND IN THE PUBLIC ARENA. It is a valid philosophy of living and it has a good and honored placed, historically, logically, philosophically and legally.

We began to build up an organization (which thrice had been shattered by our opponents). When I last left jail I had eight pesos in my pocket and the clothes on my back. There was a lot of building to do. The only thing to do was to go to work at it. My husband and I established the Society of Separationists (separation of state and church) and set out to work for Atheism also. In the three years since then we have founded an Atheist Centre in America, located in Austin, Texas. We have founded a reference library of Atheist works which now has over four hundred volumes, in addition to about seven hundred essays, small pamphlets and booklets on Atheism. We have established the "American Atheist Radio Series."

Then one day, early in 1969, my husband said to me, "Madalyn, you have been stewing so much about not having a publisher for Atheist material, why don't you publish your own book?" "What book?" I asked him. "Why," he said, "it's simple. Every week now, for almost a year, you have been on radio. Why don't you assemble one year's material and publish a book on it?" "How would we get it printed?" I asked. And he said, "We will establish our own printing company." And we did. We founded the American Atheist Press, and this is the first book to be published under that imprint.

In it you will find the original, unexpurgated radio shows produced in our American Atheist Centre and aired over those radio stations that would sell time to us.

When one speaks on radio, one finds a certain philosophy of thinking behind the production of programs. The idea current in America is that most people are idiots and that everything must be pitched at people with a mental age of twelve, and every program is loaded with the most obnoxious advertisements imaginable, which are insulting to the intelligence.

When we began our radio series, I decided that I could not bring myself to treat people like that at all. Every program has been written with the idea in mind that the general intelligence of the listeners is the high school graduate level. We had to make other assumptions too: that almost no one knew anything about Atheism (even Atheists); that hostility directed by the religious community was great; that distortions of our position were constant, and that no one really had any access to any information about us anywhere. The programs were written to build. What was given in one program was not repeated in another. This was another violation of the radio tenet that people need to be programmed and to have things drummed into their heads.

I borrowed freely from everything in our American Atheist library, giving as much credit as I could to diverse writers, or obtaining their written permission to use the material as I went along. In a fifteen minute radio talk-show, it is hard to give footnotes, so a bibliography appears at the end of the book for general reference. I paraphrased or accented to get across the "heard" word, knowing that the audience would hear it only once, and that was it.

From now on, every year, another book will follow. Meanwhile, we do want to get these programs on the air in every city in the United States. When you have read this book, if you think you have learned anything about Atheists or our philosophy from reading it, and if you think our message should be heard, please help.

I really believe in the "free marketplace of ideas" and leave the decision up to you. We need funds to finance the program everywhere. We need more equipment. We need a sound room. Our address appears throughout the book. Please help us finance a voice for Atheism in America.

MADALYN MURRAY O'HAIR

Austin, Texas
July, 1969

Program 1—June 3, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

HISTORY OF ATHEISTS' FIGHT FOR RADIO TIME

AH! AH! Don't turn that dial now.

You can be a part of history by just listening to this radio station for the next fifteen minutes.

No, I am not "some kind of a nut" to say something like that and, no, it is not an advertising gimmick either.

You are going to hear, for the first time in American history, on a major radio station, the very first broadcast of a regularly scheduled weekly radio program of an Atheist.

I am not just any Atheist either. No matter who you are, or what your age, sex, race or creed, I have affected your life in recent years because everyone in America either goes to school or has gone to school is his life, and I am Madalyn Murray O'Hair—you recognize that name—the American Atheist who removed Bible reading and prayer recitation from the public schools of our country.

My teen-age son, Bill Murray, and I did this by fighting a legal case in the courts of our land, clear up to the United States Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court agreed with us and ruled on June 17, 1963, that Bible reading and prayer recitation should indeed not be in the public schools, for this *did* violate the American principle of separation of church and state, protected by our Constitution.

Now, that was June 17, 1963, just five years ago.

Since that time I have appeared as a guest on literally hundreds of radio and television shows. Perhaps you have seen me on the Steve Allen Show, or with Les Crane, Mike Douglas, Joe Pyne, Kupcinet, Bob Kennedy, Alan Burke, Pia Lindstrom (Ingrid Bergman's daughter who has her own TV show), and even Johnny Carson. You may have heard me on many of the very famous radio talk shows with Jerry Williams, Murray Burnett, Red Benson, Long John Nebel, Alan Dale.

You must know that I have been influencing young people by guest appearances on the campuses, at Dartmouth, Harvard,

U.C.L.A., Drake, Howard, Rice, S.M.U., the Universities of Pennsylvania, of Illinois, of Maryland, of California, of Michigan; even the Roman Catholics have invited me to St. Edwards University, to St. John's University, to Loyola University.

In all those appearances I was a guest, speaking on a subject chosen for me, or within limits set by the persons who had invited me.

I am just like any woman. We all like to talk and I want to say what I have to say, freely, without any restrictions, because in our country we still have the right to do just that, especially if we can pay for it. Sometimes we need to fight to preserve these rights, or to exercise them, and I have come to be known as one such fighter.

This is why you hear me tonight, and you will hear me next week, this same night of the week, this same time, this same station. I will be here the week after that and the week after that and the week after that, indefinitely, with *something new on the American scene:* a regularly scheduled weekly broadcast by an American Atheist on a major radio station.

I'm very excited about this, and I hope you are too. Let me tell you what I plan to do.

Oh, oh! I forgot. I even have a sponsor, and there has to be a plug for that too. But my sponsor is very special! I believe that your ears are assailed with too many commercials on radio and television so I have planned these programs without any. At the end of each evening's broadcast we will simply announce the name and address of my sponsor so you can either assist us or not, as *you* like, with the continuation and broadening of this program.

During this next year I will be talking about three things: First, the principle of separation of church and state in America; Second, the need, now, to TAX THE CHURCH, and I will be talking about these things because I am an American Atheist, so the Third subject will be Atheism, so you will know what motivates us and what we are all about. Indeed, these three reasons are why we bought this air time.

I will be introducing you to all sorts of people, of all ages, men and women, who think on these subjects as I do. You will be hearing 1) our history, of which we are very proud, and justifiably so; 2) our philosophy; 3) our legal stands. You will hear some of our literature, our ideas on science, on education, on politics, *and on religion.*

My life has been hectic during these last five years because this is a controversial area *to some people.*

I say *to some people*, because when I am given the opportunity to

appear and speak, I am very well received and so are these ideas.

I have had what is called "a very poor press" and I intend to overcome that here in this city, on this radio program, in other cities on similar ones by saying directly to you what I really want to say, so that *you* can come to know the real me, and through me, what an Atheist really is.

If you have questions, write and I will answer them with a special evening set aside for that once a month.

If you have an argument with me, write, and I will air the issue and grapple with it.

If you want to support us, write and I will share your opinions with our listeners too.

Now, let's get down to a little business.

During the last five years while I have been appearing on so many television and radio stations as a guest, ministers always demanded to appear with me to refute any possible thing I might say. Always, I asked them if they believed in the bedrock American principle of freedom of speech and always they said "yes," even if quite a few of them did add "but" or "however" and then went on to argue away my right to this freedom. Quite a number agreed that I should be able not alone to appear as a guest on the social communications of our nation, but even should be able to purchase time for a program of my own.

Would you believe that I could not find, in four years, a station courageous enough even to sell me that time?

Would you believe that radio and television stations were afraid of the men of god and the religious community of America and that the Federal Communications Commission and even the United States Congress itself felt the wrath of religious groups?

Would you believe *your* church would fight *against* freedom of speech? Would you believe your minister would? Would you?

What on earth is an Atheist to get a reaction like that? Incidentally, any of you who want a free little pamphlet on just that, please send me your address and I'll put it in return mail. It is a little quiz with questions and a scale for answers to show you that there is a little bit of Atheist in everyone, even you.

Just ask for the pamphlet "What on Earth is an Atheist!" and send to the address which will be given at the end of this program.

What on earth is an Atheist but a human being, very much like you, with many of the same values, goals and ideas.

Yet, let me tell you the curious tale of the very first broadcast by one of us. Beginning in 1941, in San Francisco, California, Robert

Harold Scott began pestering radio stations there to give him air time to speak on this subject of Atheism. He fought a five year legal battle with them right up to the Federal Communications Commission, which, on July 19, 1946, supported his right to speak in the famous "Scott Decision." However, the F.C.C. characteristically did not force the radio stations to answer his demands for time.

Robert Harold Scott was then fifty seven years old, a veteran of the First World War, with an income only from his disability pension. He could not pay for radio time so he continued to nag the stations from July to November of 1946, until one of them, KQW, gave in and told him he could have one half hour *on Sunday morning*, November 17, 1946, replacing the Salt Lake City (Mormon) Tabernacle Choir generally heard at that time.

Scott went on and he has been living in a cloud of fury since!

The program was reported in *Newsweek*, and in *Time* magazine. Editorials sprang up in newspapers everywhere. The United States Congress ordered an investigation of the Federal Communications Commission and, believe it or not, held an extensive official congressional hearing which lasted several days!

KQW radio of San Francisco was deluged with letters, telegrams and telephone calls, and was so thoroughly frightened the station never asked Scott back.

Ah! But *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines took enough interest to check into the response and discovered that twenty four per cent commended the radio station for having him on. Replies favoring future Atheist broadcasts were far heavier than the station had anticipated and one Congregational minister summed it up for *Time* magazine by saying, "It is good for any institution to be under healthful criticism, including the church. It is good for any theory to defend itself from time to time."

The St. Louis, Missouri, *Post-Dispatch* newspaper put it all together nicely in an editorial titled, "Fair Play on the Microphone," which emphasized radio's obligation to protect the very precious American heritage of free speech in the case of Robert Harold Scott, Atheist, and pointed out that the "popularity of an idea has no relation to the retention of the right of free speech."

In a society of "consensus" everyone has a right to speak which must be guarded, and that includes George Wallace, Stokely Carmichael, George Lincoln Rockwell, Ayn Rand, all the Robert Harold Scotts or the Madalyn Murray O'Hairs.

Sometimes it is hard to be the guardian of such a right and I frankly would hate to own a radio station and have Billy Graham

come and ask me for time on it, as he has most probably been just as aghast that I have asked him for time on his radio stations. He never answered the letters, and I really don't blame him.

The radio station from which I speak tonight deserves an accolade from the citizens of this city, and our nation, for its ability to "play it cool" and calmly see that freedom of speech endures.

Meanwhile, you will hear me next week, same day of the week, same station, same time.

My sponsor is an organization dedicated to separation of church and state and this is reflected in the organization's name, "The Society of Separationists." I plan to tell you all about this society in a future broadcast. But if you wish to see the free pamphlet, "What on Earth is an Atheist!" write to Society of Separationists–S.O.S., for short, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. And you may reach me through that society too–P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for your courtesy in listening to what I have to say, and a very good night to you.

Program 2–June 10, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

FREETHOUGHT IN AMERICAN HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again. This is the beginning program of a radio series, and I feel quite comfortable in taking my time to get to our material.

Tonight, I want to introduce you to my sponsor and to the rather strange world of what we call "freethought," past and present.

Freethought is a word which identifies the concept of freethinking. We even have a formal definition for it. So does Webster. He says that freethinking is "unorthodox thought, specifically eighteenth century deism."

It was in the idea of "deism" or "freethought" that our nation was founded. The Declaration of Independence reflects this concept, as does our Constitution, for you will recall that in the Declaration there are phrases odd to your ear now. Let me read them to you.

The Declaration of Independence, of July 4, 1776, was a political and formal announcement that separated the thirteen colonies from Great Britain making them into the United States.

From the point of religion, it is certainly an extremely curious document, for it begins thus:

"When in the Course of *human events*, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers *of the earth*, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to *the opinion of mankind* requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation." [italics mine].

Those words are just as thrilling now as then, and they hearten me each time I read them for they were written by freethinkers or deists.

What is a deist?

Well, he is a freethinker.

What's that?

Webster says, in the *Collegiate Dictionary*, that a deist is "an adherent of deism. See synonym–Atheist."

Ohhh, how did *that* nasty word slip in?

Let's get back to deism and Webster. Deism is "a movement or system of thought advocating natural religion based on human reason rather than on revelation, emphasizing morality, and in the eighteenth century, denying the interference of the Creator with the laws of the universe."

In short, Nature and Nature's laws were God, and nature's laws were good and people were moral.

If one stops to think of the exciting new events liberalizing the religion of our day, now, all over the world, one is astounded to realize it is good old deism having a revival in a more sophisticated dress. One might say that Nature and Nature's laws have invaded religion in a miniskirt.

Now, let's look at that Declaration of Independence again. Does it say "one nation, under God?" Does it say, "God has ordained?" It does not. It is specific to say, "in the course of human events" for god could not interfere here on earth in Deist theory. It says, "powers of the earth," *not* divine kings, or divine rights of government, or god's agents. It speaks of Nature's laws and Nature's God with the laws and nature parts always enumerated *before* the God part. It speaks of a decent respect for the opinion of *mankind*, because our forefathers were really not *that* concerned with the opinion of god and his agents. They respected first the opinion of "We the People" or of "mankind." These people were true Deists.

Indeed our first four presidents in the United States were Deists, *not* Christians. They were freethinkers–George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and knowing that, suddenly the rest of the document makes sense.

Listen to this. Listen, because as I talk to you about separation of church and state, it is important that you know what our founders meant by that phrase and why we need to preserve it now.

The Declaration of Independence continues, "We hold these truths to be self evident–that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator [is this nature? in this context?] with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers *from the consent of the governed* . . ." [italics mine].

Do you hear what I hear?

Do you hear what I hear?

Is this one nation under God, or is it one nation with the power of government derived from *the consent of the governed, NOT FROM GOD* ?

Our president [Johnson] was in error when he declared recently that all existing governments are ordained by god. Ours is not. It is ordained by "We the People."

From there, this document goes on to list grievances against George III, then the king of England, and the entire document winds up as follows (and please note with me that there is only reference to Nature, and Nature's God, and the Creator of Nature, *never* to a Christian Deity).

Here we go:

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in general congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, *in the name, and by the Authority of the good people of these colonies*, [italics mine] solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of a Right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

Then are enumerated the rights of such states and the declaration ends with this sentence: " . . . and for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

In this document, and in many others, as well as in the writings of these founding fathers (and mine were numbered among them) we find over and over again a repudiation of Christianity and a reliance on Nature and Nature's God. There is even an unwillingness to use the word God and "Divine Providence," "Creator," "Natural Order" and "Nature's Laws" are often substituted for the word "god."

It all reflects reliance on natural laws. We find that this god of Nature did not interfere *ever* when men mutually pledged to each other their Lives, Fortunes and sacred Honor. There is no plea for god to help them in their hour of need, or for god to guide them. They went about their own affairs.

During this series of talks, I will present to you overwhelming evidence that the phrase "separation of church and state" meant a bedrock principle in our founding as a nation and continued to be such until well after the Civil War, the War between the States, when this principle came under attack and has been under attack by a small, but very powerful, minority since that time.

There are several interesting things in the colonial situation which

are so muted now, if not deliberately erased in our history books, that no one knows about them. No one but we sneaky Atheists who go and look them up!

Do you know that treaties are the highest laws of our land and are signed by the President and ratified by Congress and that treaties are *not* reviewable by the U.S. Supreme Court?

Well, one of the first treaties we ever concluded as a new nation was the Treaty of Tripoli with the Barbary pirates, in 1797, and let me read *this* to you from that treaty. Brace yourself.

" . . . as the government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion;. . . "

We were dealing with a "Musselman country" or a "Mohometan nation," and a part of the treaty dealt specifically with the religion of the treaty assignors, " . . . it is declared by the parties that no pretext arising from religious opinion shall ever produce an interruption of harmony existing between the two nations."

The idea of religion was deliberately approached in this treaty and was not just an incidental part or casual reference. It was a basic part of the treaty. Yet, Congress unanimously passed it, and it was signed by George Washington's successor, John Adams

Let me read that first sentence again:

"As the government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion; . . ."

During the Constitutional Convention an effort to have prayer in the hall before deliberations began was artfully defeated in such a way as not to offend the then very aged Ben Franklin who introduced a formal motion for this.

Indeed, in 1783 an attempt was made by Franklin to have a bishop or prefect apostolic appointed in the United States to represent the papal nuncio (that is that Pope in Rome). A Frenchman was proposed, but the United States Congress, in a resolution in May, 1784, respectfully disavowed any such adventure, again couching the refusal in diplomatic terms.

The Constitution of the United States was written a decade after the Declaration of Independence, and by this time, religious groups were demanding that some reference to god, christianity or Jesus Christ be put in that instrument. They had had ten years and more to try to persuade the legislative representatives or to pressure them.

Not alone were such references *not* put in, but safeguards *against* such religion intrusions were made and only "We the people of the United States" have homage to them in that instrument.

The very first thing that was established was that there would be

no religious test for office. On August 30, 1787, (and I quote from the minutes of the meeting):

"It was moved and seconded to add the following clause to the twentieth article, 'but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the authority of the United States; . . .' which [resolution] passed unanimously in the affirmative." [Now Article Six in the Constitution].

A special provision was made in the Constitution for Presidents so that any President need not swear to god in taking his oath of office (Article II, Section 1), but could take an affirmation, or affirm, if he so desired. Since the first four presidents were Deists, this precaution was very essential. None of those four, however, affirmed; they were sufficiently comfortable swearing to Nature's God, especially when the entire world, then, knew what they meant by that oath.

This right to affirm was given also to everyone else in another section of the Constitution.

From the time of the writing of the Constitution in 1787, until it was ratified and accepted, a year passed, then with a resolution to put it into operation; this was so done on September 13, 1788 and Congress was first convened on March 4, 1789.

But there was dissatisfaction, and eventually the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments, had to be added at the insistence of the people of several states.

This was done and the instrument as we know it was completed on 1791 → December 15, ~~1781~~, over fifteen years after the famous Origin of Our Nation on July 4, 1776.

In that later added Bill of Rights is the "First Amendment," and I will devote much time to this and what the famous principle of separation of church and state means to our nation now.

I can elaborate at length, and I will, on the deism of these founding fathers and many other men, who believed and believe only in Nature and Nature's Laws and Nature's God, and on "freethought" and "freethinking" to which they all subscribed. Come to think of it, I started to talk about freethought tonight, and my sponsor, and I am way off the subject. I simply will need to take another broadcast for that.

Meantime, please listen again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, that is, a group of persons who actively attempt to preserve separation of church and state in America. You may address the Society or me, through the Society, by writing to: Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117.

Austin, Texas 78767.

Again, just S.O.S., Post Office Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening to me this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 3—June 17, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

SUMMARY OF FREETHOUGHT HISTORY IN AMERICA

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Only this evening I am determined to stick to the subject so that you will learn what freethought is and what freethinkers are all about.

The first recorded use of the word "freethinker" is found in a letter of William Molyneau, French philosopher, to John Locke, an English philosopher. This letter, dated April 6, 1697, is one in which John Toland, Irish Deist and literary adventurer, is spoken of as a "candid freethinker."

Hostility came fast for, by 1708, just nine years later, Jonathan Swift, an English satirist, was echoing the then current opinion about freethinkers and he wrote, " . . . the atheists, libertines, despisers of religion, that is to say, all those who usually pass under the name of free thinkers."

The stigma was attached then and almost three hundred years later it is still with us.

The Society of Separationists (that is, persons for separation of church and state in America) has its own definition of what freethought is. This appears in its charter, its aims, and is the basis of every stand it takes.

Freethought may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of reason, and aims at establishing a system of philosophy and ethics verifiable by experience, independent of all arbitrary assumptions of authority or creeds."

That's the Society of Separationists' definition. If you ask me, I say something more simple.

Freethought is freedom to think. That's all. It is opposed to dogmatic or forced structure of thinking as in any credo or dogma.

Freethought goes under many names, depending almost entirely on the personal courage of the practictioners. We call ourselves heretics, iconoclasts, secularists, objectivists, rationalists, infidels, deists,

ethical culturists, realists, humanists, agnostics, unitarians, free-thinkers or Atheists.

I prefer to call myself an Atheist, but let me recall to you one line of the poet, Rudyard Kipling.

"The Colonel's lady and Rosie O'Grady are sisters under the skin." No matter what any one of us calls himself, a rose by any other name is a rose.

The freethinker has also had "a bad press," for, let me see, how fast I can do some arithmetic here today—1968, take away 1697 when the word was found first in a letter, seven from eight, nine from sixteen, take away one, six from eight—two hundred seventy one years later, probably the three hundred years that I guessed earlier.

There are twenty years to a generation. That's fifteen generations to anathematize that word and to foster hatred for it.

Hey! I've cut out a job for myself here to try to make that term popular, or respectable!

O.K. Let's see how we are smeared. Let's take a good look at it.

The anti-Christ—that's a good one. Individual freethinkers have had that term hurled at them for a long time. But, we are also considered as intellectual outcasts, snipers taking pot shots at respectable and conventional beliefs, peculiar individuals, village idiots, hunchbacks mad at god for having deformed them, madmen possessed of alien ideas, or, as some preacher recently put it, "sneaky snarling dogs."

[Laughter].

Oh dear! I am sorry. It breaks me up to consider some of this. You see, I am thoroughly American, thoroughly feminine, very motherly, and no one can make me look sinister. I'm a grandmother. I'm fat, and usually jolly. I work in my house, hang my washings outside when the weather is nice, do my own ironing and cooking. I love my flower gardens and I trim grass. I love to do everything everyone else does, who is a woman. I make my beds, wash the dishes. I have grey hair. I love Texas now and Austin, my home town. I fuss over my parsley bed and I'll exchange recipes with any one of you who thinks she can make better barbecued ribs.

To think that I am a snarling, sneaky dog and an anti-Christ is just too funny for words.

But there have been a few scholarly works done on us miserable outcasts of the human community.

Always the author is a little confounded when he absolutely must admit that we are, and always have been in human history, an im-

portant part of the culture.

Some historians even admit, albeit reluctantly, that we are and have been a wholesome and beneficial balance in the scale. Our best representatives have had a passion for individual liberty and honesty. The entire freethought movement in these past three hundred years in America has shown high idealism applied to praiseworthy objects. The majority of freethinkers have shown dignity and constancy and even heroism to a so-called unpopular cause.

They have represented scientific inquiry into religion, have shown fearless adherence to logic and have insisted on a strict discrimination between the known and the unknowable.

They have asserted that human intelligence, as known and manifested now, is limited, and they accept its limits realistically.

On this realism they hope to put into effect some practical plans for making society better and happier. I am very proud to be in their ranks. It is an honorable position.

Freethought assumes different characteristics in different historical periods, just as religion does. Certainly religionists in America would never dream of burning witches now. Today economic reprisals are taken instead. One of the most charming persons I ever met was Sybil Leek, an internationally famous witch from England. She sat there in her hotel room talking to me, in Chicago, with holes in her hose, a somewhat torn sari wrapped around her and we exchanged incidents of abuse to which we both had been subjected, and it is now mostly economic.

Freethought in America is entirely free of this. The worst we ever have done to an opponent is to call him names.

During the formative years of our government, freethought took the form of Deism, and the name and writings of Thomas Paine, the patron saint of the American freethought movement, have never lost the impact to us or to anyone who has encountered him through his writings which he gave to the American revolution. I will read you some of his *Age of Reason* one evening, this great man whom Teddy Roosevelt called "that dirty little Atheist."

Deism remained unorganized from the mid-1650's until the 1790's in our country—for one hundred and forty years.

A New York Deistical Society was founded then in 1796. There were all sorts of publications which followed: 1) *The Theophilanthropists,* what a name that was! It probably kept people away by the thousands; 2) *The Temple of Reason;* 3) *The Correspondent,* which sounds like something in a divorce court; 4) *The Boston Investigator*, that one in 1831; 5) *The Index*, and this was

not a list of book that Catholics can't read–it was really the organ of the Free Religious Association; and 6) *The Truth Seeker*, founded in 1873 and just now suspending publication because of the death of its editor, Charlie Smith, a friend of mine.

However, the most fiercely independent and individual person in the world is the freethinker. He usually cannot be induced into organization. The very structure of the freethought movement always defeated itself with its absolute insistence on this individual freedom, lack of rules, totally unrestrained by any programmatic or ideological restrictions.

Beginning in 1876 national conventions were held, and then we got our own high priest.

He was Robert Green Ingersoll, a Republican stalwart, and a colonel in the Army during the Civil War. His personality dominated the scene as no other. For forty three years he spoke in almost every town of size in almost every state of the Union. This is what also is so funny: the current charge hurled at Atheists, or freethinkers, is that we are Communists. Yet through our history and now, the Republican party is stronger in our ranks than any other political conviction.

Do you know the women freethinkers of America? Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Florence Nightingale, Lucretia Mott, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Margaret Sanger.

Do you know the men? Mark Twain, *the best loved of them all*, Thomas Alva Edison, Clarence Darrow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Lloyd Garrison, Horace Greeley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Eugene V. Debs, Abraham Lincoln. Oh! There are so many more, but I am trying to pick out those whom you will recognize immediately.

The Popular Science Monthly was founded by a freethinker. The Smithsonian Institution was founded by a freethinker. Stephen Girard College was founded by a freethinker. Lick Observatory was founded by a freethinker.

Freethinkers, you know, can laugh at themselves, which is more than religionists can do. Ingersoll once went to a planetarium (you know that this is a building housing a scale model reprsenting the solar system, our planets and moons. It is usually located in an observatory) and he was given the grand tour. Naturally, he was quite impressed. He turned to the director of the planetarium and said, "Who did all this?" The director shrugged his shoulders and said, "It just accidentally happened, Colonel. It just accidentally happened."

The paperback book industry was begun by a freethinker, for it

was Haldeman-Julius, with his very famous "Little Blue Books," who conceived the idea and set it into operation.

Yet, no one knows really anything about us. I am the first to admit as a student of our history that we, as a group, have made no really deep inroads into intellectual thought. In a way, actually, we have been a nuisance factor. Yet, no other philosophy has evoked such adverse criticism in the press. To have succeeded in breaking through the walls of hate which have been erected along all avenues of public information would have been a stupendous feat at any time during this last three hundred years and this is why we are here today, as ever, an underground organization with only the most brave putting up our heads to have them shot off. I will be here next week for more shots to be taken at me.

Meantime, please listen again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, that is a group of persons who actively attempt to preserve separation of church and state in America. You may address the Society or me by writing to Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Again, just S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening to me this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 4—June 24, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

LEGAL AND HISTORICAL DEFINITIONS OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I suppose everyone has sponsor troubles and I do too now. My sponsor, Society of Separationists, those persons interested in separation of church and state, has firmly reminded me that we are on the air now for a month and I still have not got down to business. Let's talk, S.O.S. tells me, about taxing the church.

This is an educational process, these radio programs; the subject is large, and besides that, I'm long winded.

Sometimes S.O.S. bugs me. (That's the Society of Separationists). One would think that it was the first organization ever to fight for separation and taxation, or that the Society had a monopoly on the idea. That's not true. Even two presidents of the United States beat S.O.S. to this. They were so concerned about church land and church wealth that they tried to get *all* church property taxed.

President Ulysses S. Grant, as early as 1875, proposed a constitutional amendment, if necessary, to provide that "all church property shall bear its proportion of taxation."

President James A. Garfield, in 1881, attempting to influence Congress to tax church property, actually addressed Congress himself on this matter and said in that speech, " . . . the divorce between church and state ought to be absolute. It ought to be so absolute that no church property anywhere, in any state or in any nation, should be exempt from taxation; for if you exempt the church property of any church organization, to that extent, you impose tax upon the whole community."

Actually, even earlier than that, when Thomas Jefferson was writing about this matter in a letter to Robert C. Weighman on June 24, 1826, he said, " . . . to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical."

But if you really want to go back to an authority whom even the most religious person will accept, let's try this.

Do you know the story? It seems a small minister was traveling around preaching and teaching a reform of the current religion. One very hot political potato, then as now, was the live question of taxation. This minister could say either, "Don't pay tax," and he would thus show disloyalty to the government, or he could say, "Pay tax," and be in popular disfavor by currying to the government.

A group of hot shot students from the seminary were sent out in a delegation to confront this minister and ask him concerning his stand.

Being politically astute, he saw the trap and said, "Well, how do you pay taxes?" The students said, "Why, with money ." He said, "Let me see the money," and they gave him a coin. Then he looked at them and said, "Whose picture is on this money?" and they replied, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus Christ, who was this minister, said, "Then render unto Caesar those things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Jesus Christ even advocated taxation.

The whole story is in *Mark* 12:13–17, *Matthew* 22:15–22 and *Luke* 20:20–26.

Let *that* be a lesson to you. Just remember that the Devil cites scriptures for his own purposes and I do it all the time.

The United States Supreme Court has talked about this too, in the Everson and Murray cases. Let's see what that legal body said in both instances. Before we do, I want to explain the First Amendment to the Constitution to you, but only in respect to religion. It says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The legal interpretation of this is that there are two clauses in this sentence. Attorneys and courts refer to these as "the establishment clause" and the "free exercise clause." The one says government cannot establish religion, and the other says government cannot prohibit the free exercise of religion.

In the Everson case the court gave a precise definition of the establishment clause.

"The Establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the federal government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force nor

influence a person to go to or to remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance, or non-attendance. *No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach and practice religion.* [italics mine]. Neither state nor the federal government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a 'wall of separation between Church and State.' "

In the Murray case, which was the case of my son, Bill Murray, and the issue of Bible reading and prayer recitation being illegally in the public schools, the court said, " . . . but the Establishment Clause is not limited to precluding the State itself from conducting religious exercises. It also forbids the State to employ its facilities or funds in a way that gives any church, or all churches, greater strength in our society than it would have by relying on its members alone. Thus, the present regimes must fall under that clause for the additional reason that public funds, though small in amount, are being used to promote a religious exercise. Through the mechanism of the State, all of the people are being required to finance a religious exercise that only some of the people want and that violates the sensibilities of others.

"*The most effective way to establish any institution is to finance it; and this truth is reflected in the appeals by church groups for public funds to finance their religious schools.* [italics mine]. Financing a church either in its strictly religious activities or in its other activities is equally unconstitutional, as I understand the Establishment Clause. Budgets for one activity may be technically separable from budgets for others. But the institution is an inseparable whole, a living organism, which is strengthened in proselytizing when it is strengthened in any department by contributions from other than its own members.

"Such contributions may not be made by the State even in a minor degree without violating the Establishment Clause. It is not the amount of public funds expended; as this case illustrates, it is the use to which public funds are put that is controlling. For the First Amendment does not say that some forms of establishment are allowed; it says that "no law respecting an establishment of religion" shall be made. What may not be done directly may not be done

indirectly lest the Establishment Clause become a mockery."

Actually churches are even saying much about this, NOW. The churches see a division here though with the businesses they own: mills, factories, hotels, banks, manufacturing plants, and they divide these into what they call "related" and "unrelated" businesses. That is, related or not related to god, heaven and salvation. Clearly a railroad is a "related" business for we all know that religious people get to heaven on a train, and the churches say "related" businesses should *not* be taxed, but unrelated businesses should be. The only difficulty with this is that to the church, everything is related, even those railroads, and this is simply dishonest.

Let's read their own words from their own general assemblies, conventions and administrative reports over the last several years.

United Presbyterians: "Churches have grown and prospered in the United States partly because of their tax-exempt status. This traditional immunity creates inequalities which endanger the future of churches and of American Society."

Methodists: "Churches should assume a fair share of the tax burden."

Baptists: "If a church competes with private business in any enterprise, the property so used should be subject to real estate taxation."

Evangelicals: "Profit-making is an unlawful subsidy forbidden by the First Amendment."

The Christian Science Monitor: To prevent American taxpayers from having in effect to subsidize religious forays into the competitive market places, Congress should revise the Internal Revenue Code."

The difficulty with all of this is that the churches keep putting tax money into their pockets, or tax immunity, while they continue to make statements like these. There is more than a "credibility gap" here, more than having your cake and eating it—this is pure and simple hypocrisy.

This is only a beginning. I have many revelations for you concerning the churches in America.

Do you know, for example, that today in America every single church denomination receives government subsidies? They no longer rely on their members to support them. And from the federal government alone, churches are receiving $16 million a day, cash, in direct aid.

Let me repeat that. Churches in America receive from the federal government *alone*, $16 million a day, while you are asked currently to accept a surtax of ten per cent on your existing tax burden.

This money does not include money and immunities received from states, cities, counties, nor does it count taxes which they escape paying to the federal government.

I will have much more on this government subsidy later.

Meantime, please listen again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

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Again, just S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening to me this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 5—July 1, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE MORMON CHURCH—Part I
A SURVEY OF BUSINESSES OWNED

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I am going to take several church denominations and go through their holdings with you on some of these broadcasts from time to time. As I do, you will find that none of these is atypical. Every single church denomination is more or less in the game. And the name of the game is Money and Tax Evasion.

Tonight let's look at the Mormon Church. Every one of the other religious groups has a particular hatred for this church and therefore it has been subject to a number of exposés over the years. So I have access to much information about the Mormons. Let's look at some of this:

No amount of official denials by the church can kill the rumors that it owns the Union Pacific Railroad, or that if the church itself does not own it, then the elders of the church do, which amounts to the same thing.

I personally checked out the veracity of the story that this church was the single biggest owner of land on the island of Oahu, in the state of Hawaii (this is the island on which the city of Honolulu and the beach of Waikiki is situated), and the story is true. The church has there invested in a tourist attraction which it labels a "cultural center" with nightly shows featuring Samoan dances, Tongan ballets, and the good old belly hula. I saw this church refuse to serve coffee at a restaurant (the use of coffee as a stimulant is against their religion) where they exploited ten and eleven-year-old girls to swing a wicked hula to late hours of an evening. During my stay on the island in 1964 and 1965, Samoan chieftains came to me because of the slave labor conditions under which they worked. I took them to the Hawaiian newspapers to expose how strident a master and proprietor the church was against these simple natives deliberately brought to the islands in order to exploit them.

In 1960 this church, on October 7, proudly announced a gigantic movement into the capitalist communit It projected a forty eight-story office building, an eleven-story A hive building, a seventeen-story annex to the Hotel Ute (which it already owned) and an added 91,000 square feet of space to the so-called "Temple," all in Salt Lake City. This was announced by the president of the Mormon Church in the *Deseret News*, a newspaper wholly owned by the church in that city.

Newsweek magazine for January 22, 1962, announced that Mormon leaders had that week purchased a $1.3 million plot of land in the heart of mid-town Manhattan, New York, as a site for a proposed thirty to forty-story skyscraper scheduled to open in 1965.

The *Deseret News* carried many news items of 'starts' of the buildings in Salt Lake City and the site for the Archive building was actually cleaned. School buildings were torn down to make way for the Administrative building. By 1966, it was reported by the Mormon-owned newspapers that the buildings were started and that in one the underground garage had been completed, as well as the foundation for the then twenty five-story (down from forty eight stories) building projected to be built upon the foundation.

Following it closely, even I had presumed that the buildings were built, but when I went on a week's tour of Utah in 1967, it was patently obvious that the Mormon church officials were liars. There was only the nineteen-story Kennecott office building leased to professional persons and small firms which was opened in 1965 by the church. Much of it was filled with the offices of that famous and infamous copper company which everyone in Utah also believes is owned by the Mormon church or its officials. The brutal history of this company gives credence to Utah residents [who say] that only from a church could come such sadism in human relations.

Newsweek magazine, meanwhile, reported that as of February 9, 1967, the New York building which was to have been completed by 1965 was not yet started.

No one knows what stopped the building program, but in these years the Mormon church has blossomed out into ownership of countless radio and television stations. We can only assume the obvious, that the money earmarked for the commercial building projects in Salt Lake City went elsewhere. Our educated guess is that money went into the purchase of the radio and television stations which command a bigger audience for the church than the populous area already in tight control in the Mormon theocracy of Salt Lake City and Utah.

It is not too difficult for the church to get radio and television stations since one of the commissioners, Robert T. Bartley, is a dedicated Mormon. This same Mr. Bartley voted against any Atheist receiving time under the Fairness Doctrine of the Federal Communications Commission on any radio or television station.

The church's television ownership includes KBOI-TV in Boise, Idaho; KID-TV in Idaho Falls, Idaho; KIRO-TV in Seattle, Washington, and KSL-TV in Salt Lake City Utah. All, I was told, are affiliates of CBS and there is again the question of how much CBS stock the church owns. Certainly, when I went for an interview at KSL-TV, a large sign over the station announced the CBS affiliation. The "Tabernacle Choir" has been a CBS radio staple in America for four decades, since the church does not miss a trick in prosyletizing, subtle or obvious.

Radio stations owned include KMBC-AM, a 5,000 watt station in Kansas City, Missouri and KMBR-FM, a 100,000 watt station in Kansas City, Missouri, both purchased in 1967 for a reported $2.2 million. At Scituate, Massachusetts, the church owns WNYW-FM, which broadcasts with 50,000 watts of power. The church states that $4.5 million was spent on this station to build it, and it now is being moved to New Jersey with Federal Communications Commission permission to beef up the power to 250,000 watts for overseas transmission. In New York City, the church owns WRFM-FM, 20,000 watts, purchased for $850,000. It also owns five international stations licensed under WNYW, operating out of New York City.

In Salt Lake City, Utah, it owns KSL-AM (50,000 watts)' and KSL-FM (13,000 watts). In Seattle, Washington, it owns KIRO-AM (50,000 watts) and KIRO-FM (16,500 watts) and KID-FM (41,000 watts). In Boise, Idaho, it owns KBOI-AM (5,000 watts) and KBOI-FM (41,000 watts). A public record indicates $9.35 million spent on radio stations in less than the two years of 1965 to 1967.

It is easy to pour out money like this, for as late as 1966, the officials of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (we call them Mormons, and they prefer to be known as Saints, or LDS'ers) were publicly stating that more than a million dollars *per day* in 'tithing' comes into the church treasury. That gives the good fathers a lot of money to spend at their own discretion, not being answerable to anyone but "our father, which art in heaven." This church has a claimed membership of only 2,020,895 in the United States.

Can you imagine what the income must be then for the Methodist church which claims 22.9 million, or the Baptist church which

claims 23.6 million, or the Roman Catholic church which claims 45.6 million?

The Mormon church leaders estimate that about $17 million goes into missionary work and $25 million into education each year. That is, about four and a half per cent in missionary work and seven per cent of the take into education. What happens to the other eighty eight and a half per cent which is about $325 million a year? That does not all go into shooting craps in neighboring Nevada. In any event, none of the profits from all the business ventures of the church are counted in that $365 million a year income.

Besides the tithes, the good LDS members are supposed to give all their free time and talents to the church. This means that when there is a church or commercial project to undertake, labor comes as much as possible from the membership—free. I saw this work in Hawaii. The administration and the officials of the church are also supposed to work free, but I will have information on that later.

I will continue their land holdings, schools and so on in another program, but for now, let's look at their businesses.

I was able to authenticate that the church owned about sixty per cent of the Utah and Idaho Sugar Company, outright. We do not know by what holding device the other forty per cent may be owned, or by whom. The church owns the Beneficial Life Insurance Company, the Home Fire Insurance Company and the Zion Loan Company. So guess who does most of the business in these fields in Utah? It owns thirty per cent of the stock of the Zion Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ZMCI) which is the largest and finest department store in Salt Lake City. Here again, the other seventy per cent of ownership is effectively hidden and may well be in the hands of the church or its officials.

The church owns the *Deseret News* newspaper, and in 1952 bought out their competitor, the *Salt Lake City Tribune.* The church also holds 300,000 shares of stock in the Times-Mirror Corporation, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper, and in early 1966 the stock was worth $18,675.000. Think of the annual dividends of that and the influence the church can exert through it.

The church owns thirty acres of downtown property in Salt Lake City, as well as two thirds of all the stock of the Hotel Utah. It owns the Hotel Temple Square, the Hotel Utah Motor Lodge and the New Ute Hotel.

Rumors are everywhere in Utah that either huge blocks of stocks or controlling interests are owned by the church in Postum (the substitute for coffee), in Western Airlines, American Motors, a local

beer company and a local spaghetti factory. People still credit the church with the ownership of the Zion First National Bank, although the church reportedly sold the control (not the total interest?) in this bank for a cool ten million dollars several years back. Again, we don't know if one of the church fathers bought that interest or not since this is obscured when inquiries are pressed.

If a federal law were to be passed which forced the churches to disclose what interests they owned, in what businesses, and how much stock and what type of stock they owned in other businesses, there would be no need for this speculation.

Surely, the representatives of god have nothing to hide?

The Society of Separationists has reminded me that it has records and booklets which it sells, and those of you who would like a list of available items should write to S.O.S.

Also, if any of you would desire to send a contribution or a gift to the sponsor in order to help defray the cost of these programs, and to help the Society to expand to other stations in other cities, any such gift would really be appreciated. The address will follow in just one minute.

Meantime, please listen again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

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Program 6—July 8, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE MORMON CHURCH—Part II
SURVEY OF BUSINESSES OWNED

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I want this evening to continue the discussion of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

When I was in Utah, some Atheist friends were telling me that the church has an enormous vault carved into a mountain near Salt Lake City and that it has this filled with documents, titles, stocks, wealth. I scoffed at them. Then I began to search out information on this myself and was floored to find out that it was true. When I humbly returned to my friends and told them that I was now a true believer in the vault, they said that since I confessed my sins of doubt and had been restored to acceptance of the true situation, they would show me the vault. I could not believe my eyes. It was there, complete with road blocks, electronic devices, guarded with barbed wire and with thick bars visible from the main road. I later saw pictures of parts of the interior and it looked like the inside of any bank vault.

I tried to find out what land they owned because I know this church has a particular interest in land. I can report only what I authenticate myself.

The Mormons own Canadian ranches including an 80,000-acre one near Cardston, Alberta, Canada, and the title to that particular ranch is held by the Corporation of the Presiding Bishop in Salt Lake City. Church members whom I met proudly informed me that the church owns tracts of land in every state of our union of almost that size, but I could only authenticate one such. The Mormons own land in Florida. Hallelujah! Do they own land there! The church's Florida farm and grove land sprawls across three central Florida counties. It was purchased nineteen years ago and is fenced with 3,000 miles of fencing. Fifty thousand acres are timberland. Two thousand acres are citrus-producing. The attorney for the church in Florida, E.

Coleman Madson, of Jacksonville, Florida, was attempting to sell the land in mid-1967 at a modest $84 million price tag. It would involve the largest single real estate transaction in Florida history when it takes place. The 170,000 acres of grazing land , with the cattle on it, is one of the largest in the United States.

As to why I can't report other land holdings, simply because the church uses a wide variety of ownership structures and devices to hide its holdings, and one needs to be a title surveyor to untangle them. One holding company is the Zion Securities Inc., which in turn is wholly owned by the church and a subsidiary of it. The church also wholly owns the Bonneville International Corporation which owns the titles to most of the radio stations and television stations indicated in last week's program. Some land and organizations are held in the name of some bishops as "Corporations Sole," or as indicated by the Corporation of the Presiding Bishop in Salt Lake City—whatever that means.

This church has gone to some great length to point out that the officers and hierarchy do not have any income from the church and formerly dramatically reported the salaries as "zero." Recently the salaries are shown as $400 a week. This is rather a modest form of poverty.

Actually the situation is quite different. The usual gimmick is to put the wheels of the church on the payroll of a company owned by the church. The church owns so many companies that by the time the officials collect their salaries, they are more than adequately compensated for services to the church. I came upon one company's annual reports, that is the Beneficial Life Insurance Company, and found that despite the fact that President David O. McKay (president of the LDS church, that is) had rarely gone out of his free suite of rooms in the Utah Hotel for the last five years, he is listed as "Chairman of the Board" of that organization and was drawing $13,400 a year when last figures could be obtained (for 1962). This represented a constant increase over figures from 1958 forward, then still available. It must be presumed that this "salary" has grown and is much more today. If David O. McKay gets a like amount from the many other businesses wholly dominated or owned by this giant theocracy, he could well receive a million dollars a year from capitalist profits of his church, in addition to his modest $400 a week. We have a state director in Utah, and when we discovered these facts together, Irv quipped to me, "Boy, the prophets take the profits."

Let's take a look at what this church can do, though, with just seven per cent of its take which is given over to eduction. With that

$42 million a year, the church supports twelve thousand missionaries. They have two thousand seminaries in forty two states, and others in Mexico and Canada.

You, dear listener, pay the taxes on those lands, which this church should be paying, because they are tax free. They also have one hundred and eighty five "institutions of religion," mostly built within the past twenty years, connected with colleges and universities and operated adjacent to campuses. The people in Salt Lake City are particularly furious with the church for obtaining land adjacent to public schools where such "institutions" of religion are located, with students often switching from building to building to interrupt their regular public school training for religious programming. No one seems to care that this is done, but the argument is that excellent business and home sites are grabbed by the church at below cost, and are, from then on, tax free.

The church owns Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho; the Latter Day Saints Business College in Salt Lake City, and the Church College in Hawaii. The showplace, however, is the Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah, just south of Salt Lake City. A conservative estimate is that the university cost $60 million with its eighty buildings and total facilities for eighteen thousand students. The students at the University of Utah are furious that the state school often charges more tuition, because the Brigham Young University is tax free. Textbooks sold at the Brigham Young University Book Store are sold without payment of sales tax, and the University of Utah students gripe explicitly about this.

The Mormon church, rarely, if ever, mentions that four of the buildings in the Brigham Young University complex came from the U.S. government, and although worth $31,535, were acquired by the church for $88.30.

The really appalling thing about the Mormon church is that while the official posture of the church is one of the "hawk" position, any young Mormon can skirt his draft into the army by taking on church mission work at a critical time. As a matter of fact, the biggest fight against the Selective Service System going federal is being fought by Representative Laurence J. Bruton, Republican of Utah, who is trying to see that the Selective Service System stays in the hands of the state administrators.

Mormons are moving into hospital care too, and are involved with sixty five hospitals in Utah, Idaho and Wyoming. I mention this only briefly, for I intend to deal with churches and hospitals at a later date, in full.

One thing is necessary to further point out before we leave this denomination. The publishing houses and book stores of this church are mammoth organizations. I have been invited to inspect some of them and I have done so. They are enormous, and they are owned by the church. But, in everything there is a little humor, for in each of these stores, and indeed everywhere in the Mormon domain, in department stores, drug stores, even five and ten cents stores, there are always all kinds of geneological books, charts and devices. It then dawned on me that, of course, the practice of polygamy until very recent date, must have so tangled the ancestry of all these people that such aids are indeed necessary. As I talked to good members of the church, as well as to not so good members of the church, it was confirmed for me that "ancestor hunting" is a necessary favorite sport.

What really made me quite angry though was their method of praying anyone into heaven, whether that person desired it or not, and that they could do this to anyone at any time, once the person was dead. I think that my ancestors would be furious if some day the Mormon church announced that it had prayed me into heaven; and I hear reports of their having prayed Lincoln and Washington into their particular heaven, and I did not like that. The Mormon church believes that the Constitution of the United States was "divinely inspired" and no historical facts of the scepticism or the deism of the founding fathers can alter their opinion or shatter this rigid precept set in their very odd faith.

The Mormon bible is an interesting document anyway, and one day in this series we will be returning to it to look at some of the ideas they espouse. But that will be later in this series.

None of the business of the Mormon church would normally interest me, except for this. It is awesome, but all religious organizations are exempt from all taxes, federal, state and local. They pay no real estate tax, no inheritance tax, no income tax, no sales tax, no gift tax, no employment tax, no social security tax (unless the minister elects to do so), and usually thay are immune, by law, from damage suits when persons are injured on their property. All income from a business which is church-owned is exempt. When a church owns a steel mill, by the device of holding title as a church or a church convention, or a church association, it does not pay the fifty two per cent corporation tax which other corporations are forced to pay. They are exempt not only from taxes, but from making any reports, no matter what their economic activities may be.

They are exempt from tax on interest, dividends, real estate, royal-

ties, rentals and capital gains. Beat that, kiddo! In some states, local governments are beginning to demand that churchs at least pay *ad valorem* taxes on unrelated business establishments. I mean by that, pay real estate tax on the land. Think of how ridiculous this is: a church owns a hotel on a corner lot. It pays the real estate tax on the land, but it does not pay any taxes on the income which comes from the business of being a hotel! In addition to that, it is usual for a church to purchase a business which was assessed for real estate taxes at one level, and have the assessment changed to half of that when the church pays the taxes.

Yet, the churches still expect all the accouterments of civilization, including a paved road up to the church, no matter where in the boon-docks it is built, without throwing in a penny toward the costs of government which gives them this benefit.

Let's go into all of this more deeply in another session.

Remember, for inquiries, for the free pamphlet "What on Earth is an Atheist," or for the list of booklets and records the Society of Separationists sells, or if you want to send a gift or contribution for the maintenance of this broadcast, or the proliferation of it, I will give you the sponsor's address in just one minute.

Meantime, please listen again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, that is a group of persons who actively attempt to preserve separation of church and state in America. You may address the Society or me by writing to the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Again, just S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening to me this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 7—July 15, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

STATISTICS ON CHURCH MEMBERS AND ATHEISTS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk to you again.

Like other people, my husband and I argue all the time. Sometimes it is louder than other times, but it is always thematic. One of his themes is that I read too much and fill my head with all kinds of "baloney," or that I forever have my nose in a book.

This last week was particularly bad, because I got my hands on some very fine translations of the principal systems of Indian philosophy.

There is a preponderance of religious texts in India, but we must never forget that in every country, and in every human era, there have been movements of agnostics, sceptics and Atheists.

They were wiped out, killed, and their literature, poetry and art was destroyed or distorted, so you can imagine my surprise to find (well, I don't speak Hindu or Indian, so let me guess at this pronunciation) the Sarva-darsana-samgraha of Mādhava, and this describes the Cārvakas, or materialists (yes, materialists), of ancient India of about the fourteenth century, roughly the year 1350. Translated, this title is "Indian Atheism," and this is a poem which has been preserved intact for over six hundred years.

There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in another world,
Nor do the actions of the four castes, orders, and so on, produce any real effect.
The Agnihotra, the three Vedas,† the ascetic's three staves, and smearing one's self with ashes,*
Were made by Nature as the livelihood of those destitute of knowledge and manliness.
*If a beast slain in the Jyotistoma rite** will itself go to heaven,*

*Daily offering or oblation in worship
† The Holy books
**A complicated Vedic ceremony

Why then does not the sacrificer forthwith offer his own father?
If the Śraddha produces gratification to beings who are dead,
Then here, too, in the case of travellers when they start, it is needless to give provisions for the journey*
If beings in heaven are gratified by our offering the Śraddha here,
Then why not give the food down below to those who are standing on the housetop?
Where life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on ghee, even though he runs into debt;
When once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return again?
If he who departs from the body goes to another world,
How is it that he comes not back again, restless for love of his kindred?
Hence it is only as a means of livelihood that Brahmins† have established here
All these ceremonies for the dead,—there is no other fruit anywhere.
*The three authors of the Vadas** were buffoons, knaves and demons.*
All the well known formulae of the pandits, jarphari, turphari, and so on††
*And all the obscene rites for the queen commanded in the Asvamedha****
These were all invented by buffoons, and so all the various kinds of presents to the priests,
While the eating of flesh was similarly commanded by night-prowling demons.

* That is, people who have died and are to travel beyond.
† Priests
** Holy books or holy bibles.
†† Obscure words of the Rg-vedo, one of the holy books
*** The Horse Sacrifice

Even then Atheists were pointing out the futility of sacrifices and ceremonies. Even then they were known as materialists hundreds and hundreds of years before Karl Marx was even born.

One of the difficulties in talking to Americans is that they are quite provincial in matters religious. They have the erroneous idea that Christianity is, really, the only religion on earth. This simply is NOT correct. It is one of the youngest and it is a minority religion in the world.

There are about three billion people on the globe. It is hard to give statistics on a program such as this, so forgive me as I round off figures and present them in such a way that they will have meaning to you.

Of these three billion, as far as we can count, a little over twenty five per cent have no religion at all–that is one fourth of the world population.

Those "obscure" religions of the East about which most of you do NOT know anything beyond the name–the Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Taoists, Shintoists, Confucians–comprise about two thirds of the religious population (oops! that's wrong) –two thirds of the *entire* population of the world.

The Christianity you know about is a miniscule group. I divide them into Roman Catholics and Protestants, and we find that there are only 585 million Roman Catholics (nineteen per cent of the world population) and 225 million Protestants (a mere seven and a half per cent).

Ah! But let's look at these figures. They are reported by the churches constantly as *estimated* memberships. Do you know how your church reports this? They use the actuary method used by insurance companies.

You took first communion perhaps at six years of age, or at twelve, or you were baptised when you were a baby, or later. The churches then count you as a member until your projected death, all with the statistical method of the insurance companies.

I am still counted in the "estimated" Presbyterians, and I have been an Atheist for thirty six years.

The churches would never dream of letting you know how many people actually *attend* church, because the figure is so shockingly low.

Less than five per cent of the Protestants in Germany attend church regularly. In the larger cities average attendance falls to as low as two per cent.

Italy is almost ninety eight per cent estimated Roman Catholic,

but only fourteen per cent attend mass and meet the minimum requirements of membership of that church.

Most French people belong nominally to the Roman Catholic church, but the number of practicing Catholics is possibly not more than fifteen per cent in a population of forty six million—only about seven million.

Greece is nominally Greek Orthodox, but church attendance is one and one half per cent on normal Sundays.

Latin America, that is South America, is notoriously Roman Catholic, but the average church attendance on Sunday is nine per cent among the women, three per cent among the men, and everyone in the world knows the problems of "anti-clericalism" in those countries.

England is a land where two out of three have been baptized into the Church of England, but the largest turnout for church is once a year—you guessed it—on Easter, when an estimated six per cent attend church.

With these statistics and with extrapolation, one can see immediately that religious claims of "estimated membership" are grossly exaggerated.

Even in America, where a higher percentage than in any other country in the world attend church, one person in five attends church *regularly*, that is, once a week.

The church talks a lot about the "unchurched" in America. The discussion is couched in vague terms, deliberately, because after 1,643 years of Christianity, the record is pretty sad. Christians have not been able to influence any more than about 250 million persons out of a world population of three billion—only about eight per cent totally.

There are, in the United States of America, seventy five million persons who do not go to church and who have never gone to church, never even entered the doors of a church.

The church reports on this lack of attendance again in a rather mystical way, but it appears that persons are counted as "regular" by some churches if they appear in church three times a year, and as "regular" by others if they appear about once a week, missing a few weeks now and then.

The Harris Poll of 1965 revealed that only thirty eight per cent of the so-called religious people in America go to church regularly, and here is the shocker: of those forty six million who attend church regularly, thirty million are children under the age of sixteen.

I am quoting church statistics, not mine.

Only fifteen million adults in America attend church regularly, fifteen million in a population of two hundred million.

The churches have undertaken, in our times, a "social doctrine" to attract the unchurched, who stay at home because they are not interested in organized religion, or do not believe in it, or do not accept it.

The churches have youth groups, rock and roll programs, far-out groups, jazz concerts and even a jazz "mass" is not uncommon, ballets by untalented church children for the *avant garde* in the midst of it all, adult "social issue" discussion groups, sales of baked goods, largely inedible, and "retreats" to study the new theology. They have coffee breaks, air conditioning, cushioned pews, way-out architecture. They feature art exhibits, hootenannies, swimming pools, outdoor terraces. They have agonizing appraisals of hippie culture. They move timidly into tail-gateing on social issues such as the war in Viet Nam, or integration or the fight on poverty; send priests into bizarre night clubs such as the famous "Hungry Eye;" prosyletize on skid row; and still, on any average Sunday, seats are half empty.

The final solution appears to be on hand now, for R.J. Smith, minister of the Bellflower church in Bellflower, California, has been rewarding every family attending Sunday services with one hundred trading stamps. "It is our way of saying 'thank you' for attending," he explained to newsmen.

Shame on you—all of you.

Now that god has officially been declared dead by the Protestant church in America, we may find a smattering of church attendance at protracted burial rites, but it's a horrible idea to kill off a leader to attract a crowd.

Shame on you—all of you.

Let's look at the Atheist who even jokes about his own death or funeral.

One of our jokes is this:

A Baptist asks an Atheist, "What will you do one minute before you die?" The answer is quick: "Why, I'll convert and become a Baptist; better one of you goes than one of us!"

The Atheist later dies and the Baptist goes to his funeral, sees the Atheist in his coffin in his shroud, and says, "Poor old John, all dressed up and no place to go!"

Atheists have no place to on on Sundays. From sociological and statistical studies we know there are about fifty two million non-

believers in America. One out of every four persons *in your town* and all over America–there are 52,075,600 of us. Two thirds of us are male. One third live in cities of 250,000 and over; two thirds live in rural America, in towns under 250,000.

The median age of an Atheist is forty two years of age. The oldest member we have in Society of Separationists is ninety two. We are doctors, scientists, authors, lawyers, college professors, veterinarians, farmers, teachers, social workers, judges, elected officials in government, news media men, dentists, office technicans, engineers, factory workers, salespeople, students, and soldiers, sailors, marines and air corpsmen. We have a chapter of S.O.S. Atheists in Viet Nam. We have many ministers too. The biggest underground in America is Atheism.

This group has never been organized before to have our voices heard and that is what we are trying to do now.

You don't have to go to church. Hardly anyone does.

You don't have to "profess a religion" (the term the census takers use). Hardly anyone really does.

You are not alone, not any more.

Meanwhile, you will hear me next week, same day of the week, same station, same time.

My sponsor is Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to separation of church and state. We sell literature, booklets, records and so on. If you care to have information from us, please write to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. If you care to support us with a gift or contribution so that we may put this program on stations in other cities, please send any sustaining gift to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, to either the Society of Separationists or to me.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 8—July 22, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

DEFINITION OF ATHEISM

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Indeed I am an Atheist, and I think it is time to say in these radio discussions exactly what an Atheist is, and what he thinks.

I am neither afraid not ashamed to say what I believe or what I am. I am an Atheist, and this means at least:

I do not believe there is a god, or any gods, personal or in nature, or manifesting himself, herself, or itself in any way. I do not believe there is such a thing as heaven, or hell, or perdition, or purgatory, or any other stages in between. I do not believe there is any life after death. I do not believe in miracles.

I do not believe in angels. I do not believe in prophets and I do not accept any holy book of any kind, be it the Bible, the Koran, the Torah, the Veda, the Upanishads, or anything else in any age in the history of man.

I do not believe in saviors and this includes any so-called saviors from Moses to Jesus Christ, or Mohammed, or his daughter Fatima, or Buddha, or the popes or any oracles, self-appointed or appointed by other persons.

I do not believe in the efficacy of prayers said by myself, or a priest, a rabbi or a minister.

I believe that, as adults, we must face the fact that this is silly. These ancient ideas are silly and we no longer need to cling to them. Some of these beliefs are an insult to you and to me. They are an insult to our intelligence, to our common sense, and to our own experience which we have gained from living.

Well, that is what I don't believe. A charge against any Atheist is that we are negative, that we do not believe, and that we should have a positive program. Many people ask us, "What is your positive approach to the many problems of man, of man living in human relationships, in a hard and cruel world?"

No, this is not corny, because you know and I know that it is a

hard, cruel and indifferent world. The most difficult thing in the world to do is to live and to get along with other people, to earn a living, to meet your basic needs. It is very difficult to do this. You have a hard time doing it and so do I. We need a decent, modern, sophisticated and workable set of standards by which we can get along with ourselves and with others. We can toss out all of this old malarkey because no god ever gave man anything and never will. Man has advanced agonizingly slowly, irrevocably, only by his own efforts. We solve our problems ourselves or they are not going to be solved and you know it and I know it.

When we first got involved in the suit to take Bible and prayer out of the public schools, we did a very unique thing. We went to a court of this land for the first time in the history of the United States; we said in court and in our legal briefs that we objected to Bible reading and prayer recitation in the public schools because we were Atheists. We did not say that we were Jews and did not, therefore, accept the New Testament. We did not say that we were Roman Catholics and did not, therefore, accept the King James version of the Bible, but only the Douay version. We did not say that we were Buddhists or Mohammedans and could not therefore accept the Christian practice. We said that we were Atheists, living in a modern world, and that we did not accept any of these old fairy tales of any kind. Our attorney said to me, "O.K., Madalyn, if you want to base your suit on this, and this alone, then you write up a little blurb about what an Atheist is and I'll put it right into the petition we file." So I did, and he did, and I want to read that to you today because for the first time in any law books, in any history books, where there is still a record of it, *an Atheist spoke up.* This is in the records of the United States Supreme Court under the title of Murray vs Curlett. The case was decided in June 1963.

The statement says:

> "Your petitioners are Atheists, and they define their beliefs as follows. An Atheist loves his fellow man instead of a god. An Atheist believes that heaven is something for which we should work now, here on earth, for all men together to enjoy. An Atheist believes that he can get no help through prayer, but that he must find in himself the inner conviction and strength to meet life, to grapple with it, to subdue it and enjoy it. An Atheist believes that only in a knowledge of himself and a knowledge of his fellow man can he find the understanding that will help to a life of fulfillment.
>
> "He seeks to know himself and his fellow man, then, rather

than to know a god. An Atheist believes that a hospital should be built instead of a church. An Atheist believes that a deed should be done instead of a prayer said. An Atheist strives for involvement in life and not escape into death. He wants disease conquered, poverty banished, war eliminated. He wants man to understand and love man. He wants an ethical way of life. He believes that we cannot rely on a god or channel action into prayer, nor hope for an end of troubles in a hereafter. He believes that we are our brothers' keepers; *but more important*, we are the keepers of our own lives; that we are responsible persons and that the job is here and the time is now."

This is what was put into our initial argument which finally came up to the United States Supreme Court. We have never hidden any of our beliefs. We do not do so now.

The statement sounds awfully serious and intense, in a way. But yet again, in another way, it is not. Do you know that we could knock tuberculosis completely off the map within perhaps two years if we have a concentrated national effort to it? Do you think we could ever do this simply by praying? So, in essence, we are persons who subscribe to the "do it yourself" doctrine of living. The churches never have bothered themselves in the health field, or to fight disease. They are much too interested in seeing that everyone gets to heaven *when* they die than to prevent anyone from dying.

About getting to heaven, we Atheists are not charlatans who promise pie in the sky. We tell you quite frankly and bluntly that the only happiness, the only fulfillment, the only total living you will ever have is right here and right now.

So get to it. Today.

You will accomplish something only with well thought out planning and hard work that you do. No one is involved in helping you but you.

Well, I know that many of you feel that the statement which we put into our suit sounds like everything that everybody really wants, and so we are no different than you are. You are right, in a way. But, we are knowledgeable, we Atheists, and we try to find some basis of rational thinking on which we can base our actions and our beliefs, and we have it. It has existed for thousands of years and it antedates Christianity which is only 1,643 years old.

We accept the technical philosophy of materialism. Aha! you think. Materialism—another dirty word. You are communists. We are, like hell. Materialism has been around for over six to eight thousand years. It is a valid philosophy of living which cannot be

discredited. Essentially, materialism's philosophy holds that nothing exists but natural phenomena.

There are no supernatural forces, no supernatural entities such as gods, or heavens or hells, or afterlives. There are no supernatural forces, nor can there be. Materialism is a word which has been corrupted and defiled by its opponents, the religious people, for thousands of years.

For instance, in ancient Greece the reactionary aristocrats destroyed the works of materialist philosopher Democritus, who rejected the idea of divine intervention in nature and in human affairs. Another materialist philosopher, Anaxagoras, was banished from Athens as an Atheist. The ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus, a disciple of Democritus and revered by the ancients for having liberated man from fear of a god and for asserting the validity of science, was for two thousand years anathematized by leaders of the church who falsely depicted him as an enemy of morality and a disseminator of vice.

The advocates of idealism, or idea-ism, have sought to slander materialism constantly, to equate it with pure hedonism and with a selfish purposeless way of life which caters only to gluttony and wasteful living, with no respect for natural material resources or other forms of life, animal or plant, or even for man.

This simply is not true.

The contemporary smear against materialism has been to equate it or associate it with communism or collectivism of man. Materialism, read it—you can see for yourself through all of the lies which are heaped upon it to hide it—materialism is a philosophy of life and living according to rational processes with intellectual and other capabilities of the individual to be developed to the highest degree in a social system where this may be possible, on an earth where conservation of the natural resources and conservation of plants, animals and nature is a goal.

I will then be talking about materialism, too, at a later date, for there is no such thing as a "dirty" word for an Atheist. We explore anything.

Meantime, you will hear me next week, same day of the week, same station, same time.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state in America. We sell booklets, records and informational matters. If you desire to see our material please contact us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. If you desire to assist us in having this program in other cities, please

send a gift for this purpose to Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for your courtesy in listening to what I have to say, and a very good night to you.

Program 9—July 29, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

REVIEW OF MATERIALIST PHILOSOPHY BASE OF ATHEISM

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Tonight I want to go over with you very briefly, materialism's philosophy which holds that nothing exists but natural phenomena; that there are no supernatural forces, no supernatural entities such as gods, or heavens, or hells, or life after death.

There are no supernatural forces, nor can there be.

We Atheists believe that nature simply exists. Matter is. Material is. There are those who would deny this. Really! There are those who would deny that nature exists. They assert that only the mind exists, that is, the mind, or idea, or spirit or whatever they want to call it. They claim that this is primary or first. The question of the relationship of the mind to material being is the root of the issue between religion, which is a way of death, and materialism, which is a way of life.

Those who regard nature as primary and thought as a property of nature, or a function of nature, belong to the camp of materialists. Those who maintain that idea or spirit or mind existed before nature or that it created nature, belong to the camp of idealism.

All conventional religions are based on idealism.

Incidentally, I think that religionists should not call this "idealism," for people like you and I get confused and we think that idealism is the pursuit of ideals. But maybe our religious brothers want people to be confused about that. I think that they should honestly call their philosophy "idea-ism" since it asserts that only ideas really exist. Let us take an example. This is not technical at all: your brain.

The materialists say that you think and you have ideas because you have a brain in your head and that this is made up of gray matter. It is so long, so wide, so high, and it weighs so much, and it has so much volume. But the religionists say that ideas came first

and that your ideas and thoughts don't really come from your brain, but that the brain really came from the ideas! Well, could you possibly think of *anything* more confused than that? Now, this is not a joke. This is the fundamental and basic argument between religionists and materialists, and you can check it in your library by books of your own selection, or through any elementary or basic texts on philosophy.

The argument is not academic. It is not an argument just to be an argument. It is a very real and living thing. For the church then proceeds to teach a contempt for the earthly life and they claim that the goal of your life is to die. The goal of life is death(!) so you can reunite with ideas once again in heaven and that heaven is really a big, big pool of ideas floating around out there somewhere. But the goal of life, which is actually death, significantly can be achieved only as a reward for obedience and meekness and acceptance of the authority of the church. If you don't accept this, what happens? Hellfire and the wrath of god come. You will not survive after death except in eternal torture.

All right, now let's get back to materialism. Materialism liberates us by teaching us not to hope for heaven beyond the grave, not to hope for happiness in death, but reather to prize life on earth and strive always to improve it. Materialism restores to man his dignity and his intellectual integrity. It restores to him confidence in himself. Man is capable of mastering the forces of nature. Man is capable of creating a social system, or improving ours to a really "Great Society," through reason and justice. Materialism's faith is in man, and man's ability to transform the world by his own efforts. This is a philosophy in every essence life asserting. It considers the struggle for progress as a moral obligation and impossible without noble ideals which inspire men to struggle and bold creative work.

Ah! But then you say that you though materialism was just the accumulation of material goods and the practice of hedonism. That is, just getting pleasure out of life, and that this was the sole objective of the life of a materialist.

Well, this simply is not true.

Materialists, and we call ourselves Atheists, do not believe, for instance, in the divinity of man, or that the world was created as a toy with which he could play, or that man is without responsibilities.

We do not think that man is an exceptionally unique being, even though not of divine origin. Man is not the center of our philosophic system. We shy away from systems of thought which exalt the hu-

man animal. We are embarrassingly aware that we are most insignificant. We are more insignificant than the sea or the winds on our planet alone. Man must share the earth with all other animals, and we are animals and we should be proud and inspired by this fact, and not ashamed of it. We must share the earth also with the earth's resources. Naturally, therefore, a true materialist, a true Atheist, is not an exploiter of man or nature. A materialist is not an accumulator, nor a wasteful user, nor a conspicuous consumer, and least of all does he revel in the glorification of man.

How does this fit in with living, simply, day by day? Do you live by the golden rule? I don't like the golden rule and you know what it is today. "Do unto others as they would do unto you. But, do it first."

Atheists are eclectic. We mean by that we pick and choose our rules. Personally I try to live by what is called the "Categorical Imperative." We have the writings of Immanuel Kant, a philosopher who lived in the 1700's. He struggled with ideas of rules of conduct and morality and came up with three suggestions.

One was that we should treat every other person and ourselves as ends, and never as means. That is, we should treat others, and more important, *ourselves,* as ends in and of themselves, and not as means to an end. You just try that one. I have tried to keep this rule for forty years and I break it all the time. It is a terribly exacting idea to try to live by. I am breaking that rule tonight. I am simply an Atheist and I should try to live as one, and here I am before this microphone now, trying to use myself as an instrument, a means to an end, which is to bring you a message of what an Atheist is, and how we live. I am violating my own ethical system tonight, and believe me, I have a struggle with my conscience constantly with this.

Kant's second suggestion was to so act that any of your actions could be made into universal laws. Now, that is something: that any of your actions could be made into universal laws. You cheat that poor old man out of some money, and then have a universal law that always, everywhere, everyone *must* cheat others out of money, including you. That sounds a little like a picture of modern America, doesn't it?

Kant's third suggestion was to search for truth. I have just about given up on that. I don't know if we will ever find out what truth is, or what it is not. For everyone brings his own subjective interpretation to the matter, Hitler said that the truth was that a final solution was needed for Jews, and he killed millions of them. The Roman

Catholic church once felt that persons had to be tortured into believing in the principles of that religion, and during the Inquisition, tortured, mutilated and massacred probably millions of persons too.

So, I have amended this third suggestion to "seek knowledge." Seek information. Keep on a quest to find out as much as you can about everything. Don't take anyone's word. Don't take my word. Don't listen to me. Go and find out for yourself. Check everything I say. Stand on your own feet.

For instance, we have a resurgence now of the notion that Bible and prayer should be in the public schools. This is founded on the idea of Christianity. Yet, the persons who espouse this act, in defiance of their own acknowledged god, in essence say that they know more about Christianity than Jesus Christ did.

Let me read you his own words about prayer in public, even prayer in church. This is in *Matthew* 6:5 of the King James version of the Bible, which I use because it was the book with which I was reared.

This is Jesus Christ speaking now:

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. (6) But thou, when thou prayest, enter into the closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father which is in secret; and thy father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (7) But when ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (8) Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this matter therefore pray ye: 'Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

Jesus Christ then gives the famous "Lord's Prayer" after admonishing that it should never be said in public, or even in synagogues *i.e.* churches.

Do you think you know more than Jesus Christ if you profess to be a Christian?

Always you should go back to the source.

Meantime, you will hear me next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state in America. We sell booklets, records, pamphlets . . . if you desire to see our list of material, just write to S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

If you desire to assist us in having this program in other cities,

please send a gift for this purpose to Society of Separationists, or to Madalyn Murray, or to "The Atheist," P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for your courtesy in listening to what I have had to say and a very good night to you.

Program 10–August 5, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

ARGUMENTS FOR GOD, HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY, WITH REFUTATION

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

The Society of Separationists, my sponsor, sells booklets, and some of these are authored by me. One of them is titled, "Why I am an Atheist." This booklet is a capsule description of what an Atheist is, what an Atheist believes and what an Atheist thinks about religion.

A part of it deals with the so-called "Arguments for god" and "his existence." I would like to read some of this to you tonight, for it is imperative that you know that religious people of all of the time of recorded history have admitted that there is no god.

You are not hearing things at all. They have admitted this.

When? When? Who?

Just listen.

We all agree, you and I and all of the religious people, everybody, on one rule of logic when we discuss things logically. This rule is that when anyone postulates a theory, that person has the burden of proof. He must show the proof of his theory. The classic example is Newton. When he postulated a theory of gravity, which later became a law, it was necessary for him to prove that his theory was correct before it was accepted by the world community of scholars, and by people in general.

It is not a surprise then, to you, to discover here with me tonight that the religious community, its scholars, teachers and theologians, churchmen of every kind, have admitted that god is only a theory. They have admitted this by their constant attempts to offer proof of their proposition and theory. They put forth more and different proofs in a constant stream in order to do this. Now, if a god really *was*, it would not be necessary for them to do this. From the way they define him, it is obvious that *he* would be able to offer this proof and not leave it to their puny efforts. He could just appear,

just once, or give incontrovertible proof in some set of laboratory conditions and that would end the arguments for all time. He does not, of course, because there is no god. He can't be called forth because he does not exist.

The theories, however, are interesting. The religionists have been putting them forth for thousands of years. Knowing that the burden of proof is on them, the religionists have assumed that burden.

We Atheists merely evaluate and categorize their arguments, and decided if we want to accept them or to reject them. For us, it is as simple as that. So, any good Atheist simply acquaints himself with every argument that has been set forth in support of the god theory since human history began.

This is impossible, you say? Not at all. The arguments are not too good and there are not too many of the basic arguments. There are elaborations on certain theme arguments, but the basics are simple. It will surprise you to hear that in thousands of years of arguments, there have been only half a dozen basic arguments. That's right—six of them.

But, think of this a moment. Why would even six arguments be needed? If there were a god, his existence would be argument enough. There would be no need to prove it half a dozen times, would there? It is only when you lose an argument that you need so much proof. Isn't it curious that with all of this every religious person says, "I believe in god"? He does not say, "There is a god." It only indicates that the proposition is indeed very tenuous, even with the help of Aristotelian syllogistics.

I am sure you are impatient. What are the possible arguments for belief in god? First, I must give you those arguments which have been abandoned.

The first group of arguments cluster around the idea of direct *sensory* experience. This is the empirical argument. Someone says he has actually talked to god, or heard him, or seen him or smelled him or touched him. Today when people say this, the psychiatrists say they are having hallucinations, and classify the hallucinations as auditory, visual, tactile or olfactory, but an hallucination no less. Have you seen god? Have you personally talked to him? Well, you can trust your own senses if you are a normal human being. If you have not seen him, felt him, talked with him, smelled him, you know no one else has. Included in this category of arguments are the ideas of "mystical insight" which "tell" you there is a god, and "intuition" which does the same. The group of ideas concerned with direct sensory experience (real or imagined) and insight or intuition (real or

imagined) has been abondoned now for many years and is not any longer considered as valid argument.

The second group of arguments has to do with "faith." This is your accepting somone else having experienced the first group of ideas, your blind acceptance of someone else's talking with god, or seeing him, or having "insight" or "intuition" which tells him there is a god. When two people share a delusion like this, the psychiatrist calls it "folie a deux" and when a large group shares this delusion, it is popularly called "religion." For the most part the modern theologians have abandoned this argument too.

The third group of older arguments had to do with authority, and depends on your acceptance of that authority. There are different kinds of authority here involved. The authority of an institution, a book, an individual person. If you accept the authority of an institution, this is the authority of a particular church: the Moslem church, the Hindu church, the pagan church, the Roman Catholic church, your particular protestant church.

You choose what you want to choose, unless you live in an era when choice is not approved, and then you have a certain religion rammed down your throat, whether you like it or nor, by a powerful institution. If you accept the authority of a book, again you have a lot of choices: the Koran, the Veda, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Apocrypha, the Upanishads, the Torah.

Again, what would have happened to you in old Mexico had you said that you did not accept their holy book? The old Aztecs would have torn your heart out of your body on one of their altars. If you accept the authority of a person, again you have a lot of choices: Mohammed, Confucius, Buddha, Moses, Fatima, Christ, Quoxichochtle. Authority, whoever is in power, rules. That is why this argument has been abandoned.

The fourth group of arguments has to do with rational and/or logical proofs. The Roman Catholic church was the longest holdout before turning to this group. But even now that church expects arguments to be logical. The kicker in this woodpile is that these so-called rational or logical proofs are based simply on *a priori* grounds. This is a high-fallutin' way of saying that the religionists start out with co-called "self-evident truths." One of these is, "In the beginning was the word." One then gets into nonsense for that sentence has absolutely no meaning at all. Understanding this we can proceed with tongue in cheek. Rational arguments can be reduced to three main categories also: the cosmological, the teleological and the ontological. Let's just look at these jawbreakers for a moment.

The cosmological argument is the most popular. This is the oldest argument and was advanced by Thomas Aquinas. It is based on the principle of cause and is called the principle of "causality." It holds that everything requires a cause to account for its existence. John Stuart Mill is the person who is credited with having put the K.O. to this argument. He tells the story that it was his little child who revealed the truth to him.

He was holding forth on this argument one day about everything needing to be caused, and his pre-school-age child was listening. He said that since everything had to be caused, god caused everything. His child interrupted and said, "Daddy, if everything is caused, who caused god?"

At first sight, of course, this argument does sound convincing, but a very brief consideration reveals that it offers no real proof at all. That is, the theorist cannot solve his dilemma by postulating an uncaused first cause, when by his first premise everything must have a cause. That is to say, who gave god the wherewithal to begin everything? Who caused god? Who is god's mother? The cosmological argument is worthless.

The old Indian myths were that the world rested on an elephant, and the elephant rested on a tortoise (a huge turtle) and then a little Indian boy who tended elephants said, "Well, what does the turtle rest on?" and the great religious philosophers there said, "Let's change the subject."

The Atheist is very practical about this. We say simply, we do not know how the universe came into being, or what caused life at all. Let us all admit our ignorance and attempt to find out the answer through science and research.

Be man enough to say with us, "We don't know, either."

The second argument, the teleological argument, is also known as the natural law argument. This was the favorite of the eighteenth century, especially under the influence of Sir Isaac Newton and the cosmographists. Generally it goes this way: as we look at the world around us, we observe an order and design which makes the assumption of a planning intelligence unavoidable. Look at the stars, the moon, the plants, the seasons, day and night, with rhythm. Actually, though, the teleological argument lies open to such easy attack that the modern theologians avoid it. What very little evidence there is of a purpose in this world, is overwhelmed by the conspicuous lack of benevolent purpose. The most unprejudiced mind can only allow that the universe appears indifferent to the life that swarms over it. Surely only a very evil deity, a very evil god, would create and smile

upon the diseases of man, on war, earthquakes, defective children, floods, droughts, hurricanes, polio. The teleological argument is worthless.

The ontological argument is the chief hope of the theologians. This holds that god's existence is implied by his nature, which the theologians define. This is an argument by definition. If we can define perfection, then it must exist. Oh, come on now! It is impossible to prove existence merely by the process of definition. If I try to describe an elf to you, or a leprecaun, no matter how much detail can be given, this does not make that elf exist. Dickens could describe his characters like no other author. Yet this did not make David Copperfield become a real-live person. The ontological argument is worthless.

Immanuel Kant tried to introduce the "moral" argument for god. This was that goodness, justice, truth, love and wisdom flow from god and therefore he exists. However, it left unsolved the problem of badness, injustice, untruth, hate and folly, and this argument fails also. After all, if god is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, *i.e.* all powerful, always present, all knowing and always good, how *could* he permit evil? This argument fails.

The latest argument, coming from America, is the pragmatic argument and this asks us, "Does it work?" Is mankind advanced or retarded by faith in a god? Well, you have history to answer that. Religion has caused more misery to all men in every single stage of history than any other single idea. I need only recount human sacrifices, the use of humans to build pyramids, the religious wars, the crusades, the crime of the Inquisition, the burning of witches, even here in America, the internecine warfare between religious groups. If that does not answer the question, then we propose that the question be asked, "Has not the idea of Santa Claus alone brought more happiness?" Of course it has. The pragmatic argument fails.

We Atheists might be pleased to accept the idea of god if a god was invented who loved people—a kind and good and honorable god. Until he is invented someday by man, we merely look at your arguments and your beliefs *and your conduct* and say, "This is not for us.'We want something better for people."

Until next week, same time, same station, same day of the week, thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Program 11–August 12, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

RATIONAL EMOTIVE THERAPY. PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ATHEISM. Part I

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk to you again.

Do you know about the new school of psychotherapy? It is called "Rational Emotive Psycho-therapy" and headquartered in New York City, New York.

It was begun by Dr. Albert Ellis, who is a member of our organization, the Society of Separationists. This is a very unusual school of therapy for mental illness and four out of every ten Americans have emotional problems. This is a very unusual type of therepy, for one of the pillars of this school is to kick out the crutch of religion from the patients who come there. In fact, Dr. Ellis vigorously attacks the "religion" of his patients, telling them that when they get rid of this "unreal" part of their lives, they can then deal with other "unreal" parts.

He has written a great number of books, all of them available at your local library, at book stores, or from us. Some of the titles are *The American Sexual Tragedy, Creative Marriage* (he is a marriage counselor too), *A Guide to Rational Living, How to Live with a Neurotic*, for those of us who are stuck with one, a curious one–*The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Man-Hunting, Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy* and half a dozen others. You will enjoy reading almost anything he has written. Spell his name E-L-L-I-S, Dr. Albert Ellis, when you make inquiry at the library. He is out in many paperback editions too.

He has written a booklet about religion, available from Society of Separationists, and the title of this is, *The Case Against Religion, A Pyschotherapist's View*. I am going to spend the next three programs reading this booklet to you. It is so very important for you to be acquainted with it.

If you want a copy of it, it costs $1.00 and you order it from us. Our address will be given at the end of the program.

Ready? Here we go.

The Case Against Religion, A Psychotherapist's View
by Dr. Albert Ellis

Before we talk sensibly about religion—or almost anything else!—we should give some king of definition of what we are talking about. Let me, therefore, start with what I think are some legitimate definitions of the term "religion." Other concepts of this term, of course, exist; but what I am talking about when I use it is as follows:

According to Webster's *New World Dictionary* religion is: "1. belief in a divine or superhuman power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe. 2. expression of this belief in conduct or ritual.

English and English (1958) in their *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms*, define religion as "a system of attitudes, practices, rites, ceremonies, and beliefs by means of which individuals or a community put themselves in relation to God or to a supernatural world and often to each other, and from which the religious person derives a set of values by which to judge events in the natural world."

The Columbia Encyclopedia, notes that "when a man becomes conscious of a power above and beyond the human, and recognizes a dependence of himself upon that power, religion has become a factor in his being."

These, then, are the definitions of religion which I accept and which I shall have in mind as I discuss the religious viewpoint in this paper. Religion, to me, must include some concept of a supernatural deity and some dependence on this deity. When the term is used merely to denote a system of beliefs, practices or ethical values which are not connected with any assumed higher power, then I believe it is used loosely and confusingly; since such a nonsupernatural system of beliefs can more accurately be described as a philosophy of life or a code of ethics, and it is misleading to confuse a believer in this general kind of philosophy or ethical code with a true religionist.

Every Atheist, in other words, has some kind of philosophy and some code of ethics; and many Atheists, in fact, have much more rigorous life philosophies and ethical systems than have most deists.

It therefore seems silly, to say that someone is religious because he happens to be philosophic or ethical; and unless we rigorously use the term religion to mean some kind of faith unfounded on fact, or dependency on some assumed superhuman entities, we broaden the

definition of the word so greatly as to make it practically meaningless.

If religion is defined as man's dependence on a power above and beyond the human, then, as a psychotherapist, I find it to be exceptionally pernicious. For the psychotherapist is normally dedicated to helping human beings in general and his patients in particular to achieve certain goals of mental health, and virtually all these goals are antithetical to a truly religious viewpoint.

Let us look at the main psychotherapeutic goals. On the basis of twenty years of clinical experience, and in basic agreement with most of my professional colleagues (such as Brasten, 1961; Driekurs, 1955; Fromm, 1955; Goldstein, 1954; Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1957; and Thorne, 1961), I would say that the psychotherapist tries to help his patients to be minimally anxious and hostile; and to this end, he tries to help them to acquire the following kind of personality traits.

1. Self-interest. The emotionally healthy individual should primarily be true to himself and not masochistically sacrifice himself for others. His kindness and consideration for others should be derived from the idea that he himself wants to enjoy freedom from unnecessary pain and restriction, and that he is only likely to do so by helping create a world in which the rights of others, as well as himself, are not needlessly curtailed.

2. Self-direction. He should assume responsibility for his own life, be able independently to work out most of his problems, and while at times wanting or preferring the cooperation and help of others, not need their support for his effectiveness or well-being.

3. Tolerance. He should fully give other human beings the right to be wrong; and while disliking or abhorring some of their behavior, still not blame them, as persons, for performing this dislikable behavior. He should accept the fact that all humans are remarkably fallible, never unrealistically expect them to be perfect, and refrain from despising or punishing them when they make inevitable mistakes and errors.

4. Acceptance of Uncertainty. The emotionally mature individual should completely accept the fact that we all live in a world of probability and chance, where there are not nor probably ever will be any absolute certainties, and should realize that it is not at all horrible—indeed—such a probabilistic, uncertain world.

5. Flexibility. He should remain intellectually flexible, be open to change at all times, and unbigotedly view the infinitely varied

people, ideas, and things in the world around him.

6. Scientific thinking. He should be objective, rational, and scientific; and be able to apply the laws of logic and of scientific method not only to external people and events, but to himself and his interpersonal relationships.

7. Commitment. He should be vitally absorbed in something outside of himself, whether it be people, things, or ideas; and should, preferably, have at least one major creative interest, as well as some outstanding human involvement. which is highly important to him, and around which he structures a good part of his life.

8. Risk-taking. The emotionally sound person should be able to take risks, to ask himself what he would really like to do in life, and then to try to do this, even though he has to risk defeat or failure. He should be adventurous (though not necessarily fool-hardy); be willing to try almost anything once, just to see how he likes it; and look forward to some breaks in his usual life routines.

9. Self acceptance. He should normally be glad to be alive, and to like himself just because he is alive, because he exists, and because he (as a living being) invariably has some power to enjoy himself, to create happiness and joy. He should not equate his worth or value to himself on his extrinsic achievements, or on what others think of him, but on his personal existence; on his ability to think, feel and act, and thereby to make some kind of an interesting, absorbed life for himself.

These, then, are the kind of personality traits which a psychotherapist is interested in helping his patients achieve and which he also, prophylactically, is interested in fostering in the lives of millions who will never be his patients.

Now, how does religion—by which, again, I mean faith unfounded on fact, or dependence on some supernatural deity—help human beings to achieve these healthy traits and thereby to avoid becoming anxious, depressed and hostile?

The answer, of course, is that it doesn't help at all; and in most respects it seriously sabotages mental health. For religion, first of all, is not self-interest; it is god-interest.

The religious person must, by virtual definition, be so concerned with whether or not his hypothesized god loves him, and whether he's doing the right thing to continue to keep in this god's good graces, that he must, at very best, put himself second and must sacrifice some of his most cherished interests to appease this god. If, moreover, he is a member of any organized religion, then he must choose his god's precepts first, those of his church and its clergy

second, and his own views and preferences third.

In a sense, the religious person must have no real views of his own; and it is presumptuous of him, in fact, to have any. In regard to sex-love affairs, to marriage and family relations, to business, to politics, and to virtually everything else that is important in his life, he must try to discover what his god and his clergy would like him to do; and he must primarily do their bidding.

Masochistic self-sacrifice is an integral part of almost all organized religions as shown, for example, in the various forms of ritualistic self-deprivation that Jews, Christians, Mohammedans and other religionists must continually undergo if they are to keep in good with their assumed gods.

Masochism indeed stems from an individual's deliberately inflicting pain on himself in order that he may guiltlessly permit himself to experience some kind of sexual or other pleasure; and the very essence of most organized religions is the performance of masochistic, guilt-soothing rituals, by which the religious individual gives himself permission to enjoy life.

Religiosity, to a large degree, essentially is masochism; and both are forms of mental sickness.

* * *

This, then, has been an introduction to the psychotherapy school which was founded by Dr. Albert Ellis. It is called Rational Emotive Psychotherapy.

We sell this booklet as well as many others. Your sponsor this evening is Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state.

Finally one day I will need to get around to reading to you the purposes of our organization. But the Society just lets me ramble on and on in this programs since the field we try to cover is a big one. If you care to get a listing of the booklets we sell, or the records, or tapes, it is available by writing to Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767, or to Madalyn Murray O'Hair [at the same address].

We do appreciate your listening. I will be with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. If you care to assist us to put this program on the air in other cities, your gift, contribution or donation would be appreciated.

We have received many good letters from you and I plan a program where we will be sharing some of these with you.

You may reach us by writing to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 12–August 19, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

RATIONAL EMOTIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ATHEISM. Part II

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I had started to read to you the booklet *The Case Against Religion, A Psychotherapist's View*, by Dr. Albert Ellis, who has introduced into America a new school of psychotherapy which he calls Rational Emotive Therapy. He had explained to you last week that one of the tenets of this school of psychotherapy is Atheism.

He also described religion as a belief in a superhuman power, with attendant rituals as people try to reach or propitiate that power or god.

He has described a healthy person, mentally healthy, as one who can and should deal with his own problems. He goes on from that position to show that a true religionist cannot do this since he has no personal philosophy of living, nor can he have one.

I continue to read.

* * *

In regard to self-direction, it can easily be seen from what has just been said that the religious person is by necessity dependent and other-directed rather than independent and self-directed. If he is true to his religious beliefs he must first bow down to his god; second, to the clergy who run this god's church; and third, to all the members of his religious sect, who are eagle-eyedly watching him to see whether he deflects an iota from the conduct his god and his church define as proper.

If religion, therefore, is largely masochism, it is even more dependency. For a man to be a true believer and to be strong and independent is impossible; religion and self-sufficiency are contradictory terms.

Tolerance, again, is a trait that the firm religionist cannot possibl possess. "I am the Lord thy God and thou shalt have no other Gods before me," sayeth Jehovah. Which means, in plain English, that

whatever any given god and his cleargy believe must be absolutely, positively true; and whatever any other person or group believes must be absolutely, positively false.

Democracy, permissiveness, and the acceptance of human fallibility are quite alien to the real religionist—since he can only believe that the creeds and commands of his particular deity should, ought and must be obeyed, and that anyone who disobeys them is patently a knave.

Religion, with its definitional absolutes, can never rest with the concept of an individual's wrongdoing or making mistakes, but must inevitably add to this the notion of his sinning and of his deserving to be punished for his sins. For, if it is merely desirable for you to refrain from harming others or committing other misdeeds, as any non-religious code of ethics will inform you that it is, then if you make a mistake and do commit some misdeeds, you are merely a wrongdoer, or one who is doing an undesirable deed and who should try to correct himself and do less wrong in the future. But if it is god-given, absolutistic law that you shall not, must not, do a wrong act, and you actually do it, you are then a miserable sinner, a worthless being, and must severely punish yourself (perhaps eternally, in Hell), for being a wrongdoer, being a fallible human.

Religion, then, by setting up absolute, god-given standards, must make you self-deprecating and dehumanized when you err; and must lead you to despise and dehumanize others when they act badly. This kind of absolutistic, perfectionistic thinking is the prime creator of the two most corroding of human emotions: anxiety and hostility.

If one of the requisites for emotional health is acceptance of uncertainty, then religion is obviously the unhealthiest state imaginable, since its prime reason for being is to enable the religionist to belive in a mystical certainty.

Just because life is so uncertain, and because millions of people think that they cannot take its vicissitudes, they invent absolutistic gods, and thereby pretend that there is some final invariant answer to things. Patently, these people are fooling themselves—and instead of healthfully admitting that they do not need certainty, but can live comfortably in this often disorderly world, they stubbornly protect their neurotic belifes by insisting that there must be the kind of certainty that they foolishly believe that they need.

This is like a child's believing that he must have a kindly father in order to survive; and then, when is father is unkindly, or perhaps has died and is nonexistent, he dreams up a father (who may be a

neighbor, a movie star, or a pure figment of his imagination) and he insists that this dream-father actually exists.

The trait of flexibility, which is so essential to proper emotional functioning, is also blocked and sabotaged by religious belief. For the person who dogmatically believes in god, and who sustains this belief with a faith unfounded in fact, which a true religionist of course must, clearly is not open to change and is necessarily bigoted.

If, for example, the scriptures of his church tell him that he shalt not even covet his neighbor's wife—let alone having actual adulterous relations with her!—he cannot ask himself "Why should I not lust after this woman as long as I don't intend to do anything about my desire for her? What is really wrong with that?" For his god and his church have spoken, and there is no appeal from this arbitrary authority, once he has brought himself to accept it.

Anytime, in fact, anyone unempirically establishes a god or a set of religious postulates which have a superhuman origin, he can thereafter use no empirical evidence whatever to question the dictates of this god or those postulates, since they are (by definition) beyond scientific validation.

The best he can do, if he wants to change any of the rules that stem from his religion, is to change the religion itself. Otherwise, he is stuck with the absolutistic axioms, and their logical corollaries, that he himself has initially accepted on faith. We may therefore note again that, just as religion is masochism, other-directedness, intolerance and refusal to accept uncertainty, it is also mental and emotional inflexibility.

In regard to scientific thinking, it practically goes without saying that this kind of cerebration is quite antithetical to religiosity. The main canon of the scientific method—as Ayer (1947), Carnap (1953), Reichenbach (1953), and a host of other modern philosophers have pointed out—is that, at least in some final analysis, or in principle, all theories be confirmable by some form of human experience, some empirical reference. But all religions which are worthy of the name contend that their superhuman entities cannot be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, felt, or otherwise humanly experienced, and that their gods and their principles are distinctly beyond science.

To believe in any of these religions, therefore, is to be unscientific at least to some extent; and it could well be contended that the more religious one is, the less scientific one tends to be. Although a religious person need not be entirely unscientific (as, for that matter, a raving maniac need not be either), it is difficult to see how he could be perfectly scientific.

While a person may be both scientific and religious (as he may also be at times sensible and at other times foolish), it is doubtful if an individual's attitude may simultaneously be truly pious and objective.

In regard to the trait of commitment, the religious individual may —for once!—have some advantages. For if he is truly religious, he is seriously committed to his god, his church or his creed; and to some extent at least, he thereby acquires a major interest in life.

Religious commitment also frequently has its serious disadvantages: since it tends to be obsessive-complusive; and it may well interfere with other kinds of healthy commitments—such as deep involvements in sex-love relations, in scientific pursuits, and even in artistic endeavors. Moreover, it is a commitment that is often motivated by guilt or hostility, and may serve as a frenzied cover-up mechanism which masks, but does not really eliminate, these underlying disturbed feelings. It is also the kind of commitment that is based on falsehoods and illusions, and that therefore easily can be shattered, thus plunging the previously committed individual into the depths of disillusionment and despair.

Not all forms of commitment, in other words, are equally healthy. The Grand Inquisitors of the medieval Catholic church were utterly dedicated to their "holy" work, and Hitler and many of his associates were fanatically committed to their Nazi doctrines. But this hardly proves that they were emotionally stable human beings.

When religious individuals are happily committed to faith, they often tend to be fanatically and dogmatically committed in an obsessive-complusive way that itself is hardly desirable. Religious commitment may well be better for a human being than no commitment to anything. But religion, to a large degree, is fanaticism—which, in turn, is an obsessive-compulsive, rigid form of holding to a viewpoint that invariably masks and provides a bulwark for the underlying insecurity of the obsessed individual.

In regard to risk-taking, it should be obvious that the religious person is highly determined not to be adventurous nor to take any of life's normal risks. He strongly believes in unvalidatable assumptions precisely because he does not want to risk following his own preferences and aims, but wants the guarantee that some higher power will back him.

Enormously fearing failure, and falsely defining his own worth as a person in terms of achievement, he sacrifices time, energy and material goods and pleasures to the worship of the assumed god, so that he can at least be sure that this god loves and supports him. All

religions worthy of the name are distinctly inhibiting, which means, in effect, that the religious person sells his soul, surrenders his own basic urges and pleasures, so he may feel comfortable with the heavenly helper that he himself has invented. Religion, then, is needless inhibition.

* * *

This continues to be an introduction to the psychotherapy of Dr. Albert Ellis, a new school in America which deals with mental and emotional health. It is called Rational Emotive Psychotherapy.

We sell this booklet as well as others. Your sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state. Copies of this booklet are available at $1.00 from the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. You may obtain a list of our other booklets, records and tapes from that same address.

I will be with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

If you care to help the Society of Separationists to put this program on the air in other cities, your gift, contribution or donation would be appreciated. The address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 13-August 26, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RATIONAL EMOTIVE THERAPY
PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ATHEISM. Part III

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk to you again.

I have been introducing you to Dr. Albert Ellis, a contemporary psychotherapist who founded the school of Rational Emotive Therapy in America. This school of psychotherapy which attempts to assist persons with emotional problems has as a tenet the philosophy of Atheism, and Dr. Ellis, in his work with people, attempts to have them understand that if they can "kick the habit" of unreal thought which is exemplified in religion, they can kick the habit of other unreal thoughts which take from them the ability to perform as integrated human beings in our culture.

During the first two readings from this work, *The Case Against Religion, A Psychotherapist's View*, we have found that a healthy person, a mentally healthy person, should have certain personality traits, among which would be:

1. Self-interest—He should know his own worth as a human being.
2. Self-direction—He should be able to run his own life.
3. Tolerance—He should be able to stand other people. (Is my mother-in-law listening?)
4. He should be able to accept the many uncertainties of life.
5. He should have the ability to be flexible.
6. He should be able to reason and make objective rational judgments of himself, life and in his business and its relationships.
7. He should have some commitments in life so that he can be absorbed (in part) in something outside of himself.
8. He should be able to take some risks.
9. He should be glad to be alive and he should like himself.

We have seen that religion does not help at all to develop these personality traits. *First*, religion is god-interest, the antithesis of self-interest. Second, Religion is church direction, not self-direction. Third, Religion is the essence of intolerance. Fourth, Religion pre-

sents absolutism and "certainties" in human life, where, in fact, there is no such thing.

Fifth, Religion is inflexible. Sixth, Religion rejects reason and requires "faith" and "obedience" to that irrational and unreasoning faith. Seventh, Religion is usually an obsessive compulsive overcommitment. Eighth, Religion completely controls living and leaves no outlet for individual judgment or risk-taking. And ninth, A religious person cannot accept himself simply because he is human and alive.

I begin to read again now from Dr. Ellis' booklet.

* * *

Finally, in regard to self-acceptance, it should again be clear that the religious devotee cannot possibly accept himself just because he is alive, because he exists and has, by mere virtue of his aliveness, some power to enjoy himself. Rather, he must make his self-acceptance utterly contingent on the acceptance of his definitional god, the church and clergy who also serve this god, and all other true believers in his religion.

If all these extrinsic persons and things accept him, he is able—and even then only temporarily and with continued underlying anxiety—to accept himself. Which means, of course, that he defines himself only through the reflected appraisals of others and loses any real, existential self that he might otherwise keep creating. Religion, for such an individual, consequently is self-abasement and self-abnegation, as, of course, virtually all the saints and mystics have clearly stated that it is.

If we summarize what we have just been saying, the conclusion seems inescapable that religion is, on almost every conceivable count, directly opposed to the goals of mental health since it basically consists of masochism, other-directedness, intolerance, refusal to accept uncertainty, unscientific thinking, needless inhibition, and self-abasement. In the one area where religion has some advantage in terms of emotional hygiene—that of encouraging hearty commitment to a cause or project in which the person may be vitally absorbed—it even tends to sabotage this advantage in two import ways: (a) it drives most of its adherents to commit themselves to its tenets for the wrong reasons—that is, to cover up instead of to face and rid themselves of their basic insecurities; and (b) it encourages a fanatic obsessive-compulsive kind of commitment that is, in its own right, a form of mental illness.

If we want to look at the problem of human disturbance a little differently, we may ask ourselves, "What are the irrational ideas

which people believe and through which they drive themselves into severe states of emotional sickness?"

After exploring this question for many years, and developing a new form of psychotherapy which is specifically directed at quickly unearthing and challenging the main irrational ideas which make people neurotic and psychotic, I have found that these ideas may be categorized under a few major headings (Ellis, 1962; Ellis and Harper, 1961a, 1961b). Here, for example, are five irrational notions, all or some of which are strongly held by practically every seriously disturbed person; here, along with these notions, are the connections between them and commonly held religious beliefs.

Irrational idea Number One is the idea that it is a dire necessity for an adult to be loved or approved by all the significant figures in his life. This idea is bolstered by the religious philosophy that if you cannot get certain people to love or approve you, you can always fall back on god's love. The thought, however, that it is quite possible for you to live comfortably in the world whether or not other people accept you is quite foreign to both emotionally disturbed people and religionists.

Irrational idea Number Two is the idea that you must be thoroughly competent, adequate and achieving in all possible respects, otherwise you are worthless. The religionists say that no, you need not be competent and achieving and in fact can be thoroughly inadequate—as long as god loves you and you are a member in good standing of the church. But this means, of course, that you must be a competent and achieving religionist—else, you are no damned good.

Irrational idea Number Three is the notion that certain people are bad, wicked and villainous and that they should be severly punished for their sins. This is the ethical basis, of course, of virtually all true religions. The concepts of guilt, blaming and sin are, in fact, almost synonymous with that of revealed religion.

Irrational idea Number Four is the belief that it is horrible, terrible and catastrophic when things are not going the way you would like them to go. This idea, again, is the very core of religiosity since the religious person invariably believes that just because he cannot stand being frustrated, and just because he must keep worrying about things turning out badly, he needs a supreme deity to supervise his thoughts and deeds and to protect him from anxiety and frustration.

Irrational idea Number Five is the idea that human unhappiness is externally caused and that people have little or no ability to control their sorrows or rid themselves of their negative feelings. Once again,

this notion is the essence of religion since real religions invariably teach that only by trusting in god and relying on and praying to him will you be able to control your sorrows or counteract your negative emotions.

Similarly, if we had the time to review all the other major irrational ideas that lead humans to become and to remain emotionally disturbed, we would quickly find that they are coexterminous with, or are strongly encouraged by, religious tenets.

If you think about this matter carefully, you will see that this close connection between mental illness and religion is inevitable and invariant since neurosis or psychosis is something of a high-class name for childishness or dependency, and religion, when correctly used, is little more than a synonym for dependency.

In the final analysis then, religion is neurosis. This is why I remarked, at a symposium on sin and psychotherapy held by the American Psychological Association a few years ago, that from a mental health standpoint, Voltaire's famous dictum should be reversed, for if there were a god, it would be necessary to uninvent him.

If the thesis of this article is correct, religion goes hand in hand with the basic irrational beliefs of human beings. These keep them dependent, anxious and hostile, and thereby create and maintain their neuroses and psychoses. What then is the role of psychotherapy in dealing with the religious views of disturbed patients? Obviously the sane and effective psychotherapist should not—as many contemporary psychoanalytic Jungian, client-centered, and existentialist therapists have contended he should—go along with his patients' religious orientation and try to help these patients live successfully with their religions, for this is equivalent to trying to help them to live successfully with their emotional illnesses.

If a man is fearfully fixated on exclusive homosexuality, or obsessively engaged in hating his boss, or complusively dependent on the love of his mother, no sensible psychotherapist would try to enable him to retain his crippling neurotic symptoms and still lead a happy life.

The effective psychotherapist, instead, would of course try to help this man live successfully without his symptoms—and to this end would keep hammering away at the basic irrational philosophies of life which cause the patient to manufacture and to hang on to his manifestations of emotional illness.

So will the therapist, if he himself is not too sick or gutless, attack the patient's religiosity. Not only will he show this patient that he is

religious—meaning, as we previously noted, that he is masochistic, other-directed, intolerant, unable to accept uncertainty, unscientific, needlessly inhibited, self-abasing and fanatic—but he will also quite vigorously and forcefully question, challenge and attack the patient's irrational beliefs that support these disturbed traits.

This is what is done in my own scheme of psychotherapy, which is called rational-emotive psychotherapy. Where other systems of therapy largely try to give the patient insight into the origins of his self-defeating beliefs (as, for example, the Freudians do) or try to help him accept himself with his self-sabotaging behavior (as the existential and client-centered therapists do), in rational therapy we give him insight and accept him in spite of his failings—but we also, and I think more importantly, clearly show him how he keeps maintaining his early-acquired irrationalities by indoctrinating himself over and over with nonsensical internalized sentences which sustain this nonsense; and show him how he can concretely challenge and contradict these internalized philosophies, by logically parsing and analyzing them, and by convincing himself that he must give them up if he is to regain emotional health.

Rational-emotive psychotherapy, in other words, goes distinctly beyond the usual insight-producing and patient-accepting methods of treatment in that it actively de-propagandizes the patient, and teaches him how to keep de-propagandizing himself for the rest of his life, so that the highly irrational, and essentially superstitious and religious, beliefs that he acquired from his parents and his culture can be thoroughly combatted until they are truly non-existent.

* * *

And that is the judgment of a psychotherapist in respect to religion.

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The Society of Separationists is an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state.

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If you care to help the Society of Separationists to put this program on the air in other cities, your gift contribution or donation would be appreciated. The address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We are in negotiations now with four additional radio stations in other parts of the country and we will soon be announcing the beginning of the same kinds of programs there.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 14–September 2, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

At the beginning of these programs I said that I would share with you the mail which came to me as a result of the program. We have been inundated with it. At times I get several weeks behind just trying to get answers out to the letters which come in as a result of this broadcast, so please be patient with me.

I have a problem. The Federal Communications Commission and this good radio station do not permit the use of brutal and obscene language on the air, and therefore I cannot read some of the letters from Christians. I am assembling them for a book which will be called just that: "Letters from Christians."

I can read some of the milder ones here.

Mrs. O'Hair.

As I sit here listening to you, I am convinced as I can be that you are an absolute idiot. Tax the church! God deliver us from people like you. People who are only out to get attention as it seems you are. You are in the minority, so keep your fat mouth shut and stop causing trouble. All I can say is "good luck when you die,' 'cause no one's gonna be there but you and Christ, 'face to face.'

Keep up tax free churches!

(signed) A Blessed Believer in Christ.

There is a large cross drawn under the signature in double lines.

Dear Mrs. Murray,

I have listened to a lot of people on radio, but when I hear you I actually get sick. Taking away the prayer from public schools shows your rotten communistic ideas. Why don't you take a fast jet to Russia and stay there.

Many people like you, without faith, go to psychiatrists for treatment. How I pity you. You are a disgrace to humanity. God will punish you.

This is anonymous. Here is another one.

Miss Atheist O'Hair,

It could be, that before your year on KTBC radio is over, you will realize your stupidity, and might even become aware of the curse you are heaping on your soul.

Think it over.

That was signed with the name of a man. No address. Ah! Here is one.

Thing, (That means me! 'Thing')

Are you nuts?

Why don't you devote your time to something worthwhile, and why don't you ask for your help from Moscow?

That one is not signed either. Most of them are not. Ah! Here is another. This person wrote in for some of our booklets which we sell and we sent what she ordered, and here is the reply we received back.

Dear S.O.S.,

Do not send me any more of your vile literature. My having inquired and sent the dollar was through misinformation. I was given the impression you had to do with and were advocating *racial separation* [italics mine] and affirming that this is by God's law and rules as set forth in the Holy Bible, "each into his own kind."

I realize that a great percentage of the people and ministers are in one or all of three categories: Hypocrites, pious frauds and/or misguided fools.

I do agree that churches are 'big business' and should not be allowed to be so, also that they should pay their share of taxes. I also realize that frustrations, disillusion and misery bring people to Atheism. You all think there is no god because your prayers are not answered.

I just do not have the time to write at length to you. You do not truly understand. You claim to be open-minded. Well if you are, you should listen to Billy Graham. I do, and I am a co-worker of Christ. God hears all my prayers and guides and gives me all that is for my highest good."

This woman signs her name and address.

Let's see. Just a couple more for the "cons" and then we can read some letters from the "pro" side. Some of these are short and to the point.

Miss O'Hairy [sic]

You're a bum. What more can I say. Christ will ruin you and your kind will burn in eternal hell.

This is not signed either. Here is another.

Mrs. Madalyn Murray O'Hair,

Deuteronomy, Chapter 7, Verse 10. He will repay them that hate him in their face. I wrote Clarence Darrow of Chicago, Illinois, 'God will sit you down and you will think of all the things you have said about him.' So will you lady. Your health shall fail to allow you to cause much damage. The gates of hell shall not prevail against his church Jesus said. So your next breath, next heart beat is in the hands of God. Beware, don't take this chance. I am sorry for you. God-almighty can blow that radio station out into the flats. You with it. Beware, as ever in his name.

That one is from a minister in your town. Can you guess which denomination? The clue is that he has to be fairly old to have written to Clarence Darrow, because Clarence Darrow, the most famous attorney in American history, died in 1938. Clarence Darrow and his wife Ruby were both Atheists.

Here we go again.

Madam, You are ugly, bold and loud-mouthed.

This is unsigned too. Well, it is a free world and everyone is entitled to his opinion about me, just as I am entitled to my opinions. I have read these letters without comment.

Now, a few of the "pros."

My dear Madalyn,

I think the way you do, and it's too bad that the general public does not accept plain common sense. The church has sold the little lambs a great bill of goods. I am of the Jewish faith, but I am not buying their teachings. I am charitable, won't cheat anyone. My faith is in my heart.

Stay well. People will wake up one day.

Signed—with name and address.

Dear Mrs. Murray,

I am pleased to have the pleasure to hear you. I'm an agnostic and have experienced the hate and bigotry of the demented. This is why a great many Atheists just do not reveal their views on the subject for fear of persecution. I am now 75 years of age, tired, and pay little attention to them.

I like to use an imaginary situation to show people how stupid the whole thing is. In this situation, a Jewish woman and an Italian woman were in the hospital at the same time giving birth. They were both dark skinned with dark hair and eyes. The nurses by mistake switched the babies, and laid the Jewish babe in the Roman Catholic Italian's arms and the Italian babe in the Jewish mother's arms. The Italian child grew up in a synagogue and the Jewish child grew up going to mass. That's indoctrination; not reasoning.

He signs his name and address.

Dear Mrs. O'Hare,

Did you know that Charles Durant,* founder of the Red Cross, was an Atheist?

She signs her name and address. I did not know that, but I will check on it.

Dear Miss Murray,

Thank you for expressing in public what so many of us are not given a chance to do. Thank you for the courageous stand you are taking in behalf of freedom from superstition and the power of organized religion.

I hope you will continue your work until the United States becomes a truly secular society as guaranteed in the Constitution. Organized religion is surely the epitome of hypocrisy when they deny Atheists the right to their own beliefs.

She signs her name and address.

When I get letters like the following, I really don't know how to answer them at all–but I try.

Mrs. O'Hare,

I have just listened to you.

I agree with you one hundred per cent.

The church should be taxed and the Atheists should be given a free place in society.

I was a Catholic [the 'was' is underlined]. Now I don't know what I am. I refuse to believe in the churches' simple way of teaching a much more complex faith.

I would like to say that I am only 16. [Let me re-read that: 'I would like to say that I am only 16'], but went to Catholic school for eight of those sixteen years. In this school the nuns taught poorly. They try to confuse science with religion,

* actual name: (Jean) Henri Durant

always bringing God's name into things like the atom bomb and others.

I am a little depressed because my parents made me go to a Catholic school. It was a terrible school.

Here's an example of some of the money making schemes which go tax free. The Christmas play, the child was forced to take four tickets and sell them at $1.00 each. If you did not sell the tickets, this was put on your tuition bill, and most of the time kept after school. There were 400 children in the school, so you could imagine how much money was made.

(2) Raffles were frequently held (five times) and two books at $5.00 a piece were sent to each family and had to be sold or else it was put on the tuition also.

(3) A bazaar was held every year which the church made much profit on, untaxed.

(4) At Christmas you had to buy one box of cards at $1.00 a box.

(5) This is the one that will really get you. On the Sunday 11:00 A.M. mass the priest said, "If you put an offering in, make it a minimum of $5.00."

These were just some of many ways the church is making money untaxed.

I don't think the church has any right to operate and get their main source of income from this country and not pay any taxes. The church could well afford to pay taxes and more.

I don't think the government should give grants to the church for schools when it is in need of better schools itself.

The church is the biggest money making organization in the world. It should not profess politics when having sermons. It should be concerned mainly with the soul in which they believe and nothing else.

I think the church is hypocritical and greedy and I do not want to be associated with them not even by calling myself a Catholic. I wish there were more people like you. It would be a great country.

There is his full name and address.

This brings me to a point. I am surprised at the number of people who do write to me and who give a recitative such as this about experiences within their own church, and the effect those experiences had on them, in their beliefs. This is what the church over-

looks. It does not understand the impact on people and that people are *not* unintelligent as the church assumes them to be. I received one such letter which was, in my opinion, a major sociological document of our time and I asked the woman who wrote it if I could make a booklet out of it. She is fifty seven years old. We wrote several letters back and forth and she was afraid to openly say what she wanted to say if her name was attached to it. Finally she came upon the name of Carolynne Simms and we published a booklet of just her letters. It is off the press, and we call it *Letters from a Roman Catholic.* It is available to you for $1.00 at the address given at the conclusion of this program.

But to get back, what should I say to this young man?

Well, I have written him a letter and it goes something like this.

Dear Mark,

A lack of communication between people is the most serious thing in the world toward unhappy relationships between those people.

You should tell your parents, and your priest, exactly what you have told me, and then go further, and tell them the reasons that you feel this way, which you have not put into your letter to me at all, and which are there.

You have to be honest, Mark, and to use your own mind.

Best of luck to you when you do this.

(signed) Madalyn Murray O'Hair

That's all for this evening. I will be back next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization devoted to separation of church and state and towards efforts to see that churches pay their fair burden of the tax load we all have. More on that next week.

If you desire to obtain the booklet of Carolynne Simms, it is $1.00. Just write to Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. We have many booklets, records and tapes. We will send you a listing of them if you desire. We welcome your comments on this program.

We will soon be going on the air in two more cities and if you desire to help us with a financial contribution, the address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 15–September 9, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

STOCK HOLDINGS OF CHURCHES, A SAMPLING

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I speak a lot at colleges, universities, churches and on radio and television. Often someone will say to me, "What are you so worried about with the churches and how much money they may or may not have? They don't own anything, Madalyn."

Actually many people think this. For a long time I did. But, it is not true. For many years I thought that the wealth of the churches, if indeed they had any at all, was in their church buildings, their statuary and art, the homes of their ministers, in their schools, in cemeteries. Naively, I thought that the money they got came from the collection plate every Sunday.

Maybe that's the impression that the churches want to give. I had it. Yet, I could hardly be identified as an ordinary housewife. I have been involved in a lot of things in my life. My father was a building contractor and engineer. He wanted an engineer in the family and when I first went to college, I took courses in engineering at the University of Pittsburgh. But, I was a woman and the University refused to give me a degree in civil engineering because of that, which tells how old I am. I went on from there to become one of the first commissioned officers in the Women's Army Corps, one of the first women shipped overseas to Africa, Italy, France. I came home and became one of the few women attorneys in America. I was one of the first white women to enter one of the graduate schools of Howard University, an all Negro college in Washington, D.C. I was one of the first women to receive a scholarship from the National Institute of Mental Health. I was the first non-Jew to work in the famous Jewish Family and Children's Agency in America, in Baltimore, Maryland. I was one of the first women hired by Social Security as an attorney. I was the first person to successfully organize government employees into a union when that activity was strictly verboten.

I have a life full of work such as this behind me and much to do ahead of me. But I was pitifully naive about the church and what the church owned and where its money came from until about four years ago. So, if you are average Joe Citizen, or Mrs. Housewife, or Ye Student, don't feel badly if you don't know what the church's game is in respect to money.

After years of research I have only some of it. You all may know about icebergs. It seems that only fifteen per cent of their mass and volume ever shows above the waters and it is pretty much the same with the churches and their wealth and income.

Let me give you an example. In every family there is an example. Someone owns twenty shares of stock in Eastman Kodak, has a life insurance policy for $5,000 and has a home that is paid for because the person is pretty old and has paid the mortgage out in full. That person dies and leaves the twenty shares of stock, the balance of the life insurance after the funeral, and the little home to the church. Now, this has been going on in America ever since there was an America.

In city after city across the United States, as that little home became a slum, we hear reports constantly that the landlord in those festering slums and ghettos is quite often a church. The land and the house came to them via a will and a death and the church has rented the house ever since.

Occasionally we see what happens in respect to the stock, and that is what I want to trace tonight. Let's take another example. I read a letter to you on a recent broadcast. It was from a woman who was a segregationist and who wanted the Negro people kept in their "proper place," not mixed with the white. A sincerely religious person, she felt that the Bible told her that this was the proper thing and she wanted it that way. Now, suppose this woman had stock in Eastman Kodak Company and she died and willed this stock to her church because she felt that the church she attended was aiding the cause of the Bible and of Christianity by continuing segregation in her church, which did not permit Negroes in to worship.

She would spin in her grave if she thought that the church took that stock to fight *for* the Negro, wouldn't she?

Well, when the church does get openly into politics, and the church *sub rosa* is *always* politics, we often see a little about how much stock they have.

In mid-1967, the Eastman Kodak Company repudiated an agreement to hire more Negroes than the quota that the company had fixed for token integration and a coalition of churches decided to

challenge the management of that company at its annual stockholders' meeting and to demand that a higher percentage of Negroes be hired. The newspapers, through the services of the Associated Press and United Press International, reported this briefly, but it took me over a year to dig up the rest of the information. From my inquiry, this is what I found:

The United Church of Christ was formed from a merger of several churches ten years ago, and from that merger the church came out with two million members (they are called 'souls' in this church—two million souls). The United Church of Christ holds eleven thousand shares (a little over that) of stock in Eastman Kodak. This is valued at not quite two million dollars. This means that the United Church of Christ has so much money that it does not need for anything and it can use it to purchase stock and augment the income of the church by the dividend or profit of that stock every year.

All right, two million dollars is not very much, so I dug further. The two million members of this church give contributions, and in one of the reports the church disclosed that after all the expenses to keep the local churches going, ministers' salaries, upkeep of the church, all of that, the church had $10,604,257 left over in 1965 and $11,764,639 left over in 1966. At this point it admitted that it had $184 million worth of stock and only two million dollars worth was invested in Eastman Kodak. The church declined to say where the other $182 million worth of stock was invested.

Well, at about five per cent yield, and surely this church is not so dumb as to invest in anything that yields less than that, the $184 million is bringing the church a profit of nine million dollars a year —almost as much money as the church has excess from the collection plate each year.

If you own any Eastman Kodak stock and you get a dividend, you pay taxes on that dividend, and you must report to Internal Revenue exactly what stock you own, and how much dividend you get. My husband had to report thirty six cents interest last year that he received on his small savings account. The United Church of Christ does not need to report where their $184 million is invested, how much profit or dividend or yield it makes on that money, what the church spends it for. Again, this church pays no tax on that over-nine million dollars a year which it derives from business, for a business investment unrelated to church activitiy.

But let's go on with Eastman Kodak, for it is a fascinating insight into the church and the churches' morals where money is concerned.

The Episcopal church was in the Eastman fight, and the presiding

bishop of that church disclosed that *he* owned, through the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church, five thousand shares of Kodak stock valued at about three quarters of a million dollars. Yes, he said, the 'Foreign Missionary Society,' with children dying of malnutrition in Biafra, the 'foreign missionary' money was at work in America, in Eastman Kodak, gaining money for the church.

The United Presbyterian church disclosed that it too owned shares in Eastman, but discreetly declined to say how many. At least the other churches were honest enough to reveal their holdings, but not the good old United Presbyterians. That church plays its cards close to the chest.

The Methodist church disclosed that through its Board of Missions it owned 10,500 shares, which are valued at well over one and a half million dollars.

The Reformed Church of America, which owned only 1,900 shares, put out a very significant statement. That church requested that its stockholders who sit on its various boards withhold their stock proxies in the fight, and then disclosed that individual members of their boards of directors of the various functions of the church owned stock which they estimated to be about two to three thousand shares. We are not told if the members owned them *in their individual names for the church,* or if this was individual ownership, but the entire thing is suspect just on the facts known.

An issue was raised here in any event. Can the churches become so powerful in their ownership of stock that they can tell a private organization what it will or will not do in the confines of its own factory?

The question is interesting because the Methodist Board of Missions went further than this and voted to remove its ten million dollar investment portfolio from the First National City Bank of New York unless that bank would cease giving credit to the government of South Africa which is an apartheid government.

The issue again is, can a church tell a bank with whom it can do business simply because it has a large investment portfolio in the bank?

The cry comes back that the church was doing a noble thing in trying to get more Negroes employed, or to punish an apartheid government, but suppose the issue had been that which recently came up in Greece. There, the government ordered everyone in the nation to pray in the Greek Orthodox church for the prime minister who had been the object of an assassination attempt.

Suppose the Greek Orthodox church had control of the stock in one of your local factories and gave orders that everyone in the factory would attend a Greek Orthodox prayer service for the prime minister or be fired if this wasn't done, since they had controlling stock. If you were a Methodist or an Episcopalian, or a Presbyterian, or a member of the Reformed Church of America or Church of Christ, would you go to the services? Yet, your church intervenes to do something by force, by coercion, in Eastman Kodak.

There are constant limited releases from the churches which give more glimpses of what goes on. For instance, in 1915 the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society reported it owned bonds in forty three railroad companies, eighteen electric, gas and water companies, and in telephone and telegraph. It reported itself to be a large stockholder in fifteen corporations, but declined to name them, and said that it held innumerable notes secured by real estate mortgages.

In the same year the Presbyterians reported investments in railroads, banks, telegraph, electrical and industrial firms. The Board of Foreign Missions alone, way back then, had $3,050,600.28 in an investment portfolio *in one bank.* Ask your friendly stock broker to tell you what the stock would be worth today. In fifteen years, investments double at a five per cent dividend. This stock would be worth roughtly twenty five million dollars today, and at five per cent would return a yearly profit of two and a half million dollars, tax free, provided that not one more share had ever been bought. This is on the same investment of 1915, just staying put.

However, this is not the case. In June of this year, C.B.S. gave a report on church wealth over their affiliated network television stations, and in this report was a very interesting statement. The commentator said that a major Wall Street investment company in 1965 attempted a partial study of securities (that is, stocks and bonds) held by churches. It counted up to about three billion dollars worth of stock before concluding that it was an impossible task to even count it, and gave up the study.

Three billion dollars worth of stock, at a five per cent yield, would bring in $150 million a year to the churches involved, tax free. The churches do not even need to report what they own to any agency of government, local, state or federal. They do not need to report what they do with this money, even to their own congregations and they pay no taxes on it whatsoever. When the Roman Catholic Church, in December, 1966, sold its fifty per cent share in the royalties of Listerine at a profit of twenty five million dollars, no one even knew about it and that twenty five million dollars was tax

free. A handy little sum to pick up now and then, isn't it?

That's all for this evening. I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Until then, if you wish to help us to do something about this, if you want to see someone TAX THE CHURCH, you can help by sending a contribution, or by purchasing the books, pamphlets and records which we sell. One booklet, *Let Us Prey*, selling for $2.00, lists forty five pages of church wealth. It is available by writing to Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the principle of separation of church and state and seeking now to see that churches are taxed on their income.

You may write to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 16–September 16, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

GENERAL BUSINESS HOLDINGS OF CHURCHES, A SAMPLING

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I have been discussing church wealth. So far, I have covered only the stocks that the churches own, and I have not even completed that.

But, I want to take time on this program just to skim the surface of the businesses that the churches own. The only way I can proceed is just to sock it to you. Ready?

The 435-room Biltmore Hotel in Dayton, Ohio is owned by the First Baptist, the First Christian and the Third Presbyterian Churches of Bloomington, Illinois. They forgot their interdenominational fights when they found they could go into business together at a profit. Is this what the church means by the spirit of ecumenism?

As I go over these, watch the geography. The churches are located in one state and own property in another.

The land under Rockefeller Center in New York belongs to the Episcopal Church. The land under Yankee Stadium is Roman Catholic. The Pope was playing on home field in his 1965 visit to America. Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood, California, and the El Rancho Hotel in Sacramento, California, belong to the Roman Catholic St. Andrew's Church of Chicago.

The Self-Realization Fellowship owns a mushroomburger restaurant in Hollywood, and another in Encinitas, California.

A twenty-two-story building, valued at six million dollars, the Chicago Temple, erected in the Loop in 1924, belongs to the First Methodist Church which rents to lawyers, accountants, professional people, and pays no income tax on the rental receipts.

The $60,000 sanctuary of the Greater Christian Church of Oklahoma was financed by the sale of steers on the open market. These were special steers, for they belonged to a church and were sold with a tax free profit for that church.

The International Four Square Gospel, founded in Los Angeles by the late Aimee Semple McPherson, operates two radio stations valued conservatively at three million dollars.

The American Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio, owns the Wortberg Press Building and in Massachusetts, the Congregational Christian Church owns an inn on Cape Cod.

The Southern Baptists have a lease-back gimmick deal whereby they own the Burlington Mills, a textile mill in Cheraw, South Carolina, purchased for $2.9 million in 1959.

Loma Linda Food empire, which consists of fifteen companies, is coming on strong in the food industry, and seeking to rival the H.J. Heinz 57 Varieties. It is owned by the Seventh Day Adventist Church. This church also owns Harris Pine Mills in Oregon and a number of other commercial businesses such as bakeries, furniture stores and filling stations.

If you live in Clairmont, New Hampshire, the Congregational Church owns the laundry there.

The Temple Baptist Church in Los Angeles owns all the stock of the Auditorium Company as well as the Philharmonic Auditorium and Office Building. It pays no federal or state income tax on this.

The Muskingum Presbytery of Ohio operates a cement block factory in Arizona.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco owns an enormous warehouse building there, and the largest dump for the city of Chicago is also owned by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Cathedral of Tomorrow, an evangelical church out of Akron, Ohio, through its "Temple Plaza" Corporation, bought the Real Form Girdle Company of Brooklyn, New York in August 1965. No, I am not stretching the truth! This is a real girdle company and one of the biggest in the United States. This same church purchased the Unity Electronics Company in Elizabeth, New Jersey in September, 1965 and the Nassau Plastics and Wire Company, Brooklyn, New York in October, 1965. Naturally, this is all a tax-free operation as is a shopping center this church owns in Akron, Ohio. The Cathedral spends twenty thousand dollars a week on radio and television to broadcast seven thousand programs each week asking for money from the faithful.

Why don't you all send S.O.S. money like that? We would like to own a girdle factory too. Maybe it would solve my figure problem. I could bless handkerchiefs for you for ten dollars each, or something like that, and my blessing would be just as efficacious as that of any minister.

The Roman Catholic Church has been around longer than any other church and, of course, it owns more. It, or its religious orders, own department stores in St. Louis, Missouri, Camden, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In Hartford, Connecticut it bought the Bond and Vendome Hotels, in Columbus, Ohio, the Montgomery Ward Building (What! The Montgomery Ward Building! What has that got to do with heaven?). Oh well, to go on, in Newport, Rhode Island, the Strand Theatre; in New Haven, Connecticut, the New Haven Railway Headquarters Building and the Sheraton Hotel; in Detroit, Michigan, the Crucible Steel Company's warehouse; in Chicago, Illinois, the Brunswick-Balke-Callender Building; in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the two million dollar steel tube mill of the Bridgeport Brass Company. A steel tube mill? Surely there is not an ecumenical plan to shoot people to heaven in steel tubes?

Trinity Church in New York City, in 1915, reported owning thirty million dollars worth of real estate in New York alone. *Time* magazine of September 2, 1967 revealed that Trinity Church now has title to twenty Manhattan office and industrial buildings.

The churches do not need to report what businesses they own, what buildings they own, what corporations they own, what stocks and bonds they have. They pay no income tax on any of the profits of these businesses at all, and they are never queried as to what they do with the money.

The churches say that they need this money to do good. I have challenged many of them to release figures showing the income they have and the percentage of that income which is used to "do good." The largest figure I have seen was seven per cent of income, and the income was not defined, used vaguely for "charitable purposes."

So let's take a look at who is doing what good in America and where and with what money. Look at your nation, your state, your county, your city. You have eyes and you are not dumb.

The churches have uniformly abandoned the blind, the lame, the halt, the widow and the orphan. Local governments, city and county, aided by federal and state funds, are responsible for taking care of the indigent through welfare and relief programs. Social Security covers the totally disabled and aged workers with their dependent children. States assist the mentally ill with hospitals and clinics, and the blind and deaf with schools and homes. The parentless child goes to country and city foster homes or child-care centers, Delinquents are held and treated in state and county homes and institutions. Narcotic addicts receive care in federal hospitals. The unemployed are compensated on a state level and the industrially disabled the

same through workmen's compensation laws, in part federally, in part state supported. Veterans get special help for education, for land, home and business loans, and for hospital care, and old age benefits, all with federal money. Wage increases and pensions are the result of union activity, generally, and of self-help. Universal education for all children comes from the state. Heart, muscular dystrophy, cancer, arthritis, and other health programs are researched by private foundations and publicly supported campaigns. Tuberculosis hospitals are exclusively governmental concerns. Public hospitals and clinics federally subsidized, or supported by state or city, deliver our young and fight disease to preserve our lives. The Red Cross and the National Guard help in disasters, and the Good Will and private industries hire and train the handicapped. Housing projects are government concerns, as are fire and police protection, sewage disposal and highways, roads and traffic. A myriad of public and private agencies function, supported by Community Chest drives, so that unwed mothers may have care, children can be adopted and marriages and personal counseling can be given to disturbed persons individually, or in family groups.

What does that leave for the church to do?

They have church agencies for counseling. This is where I worked for about fifteen years as a professional psychiatric social worker, so I know what I am talking about in this field. Go to a church agency for a foster home, or for marriage counseling, or with a distrubed child. You pay what the traffic will bear, which may be from two to fifty dollars for half an hour of counseling, and foster homes for children can run up to $150 per month.

With the church, everything has its price. You had better believe it. The only church agency which I have ever seen in fifteen years of work in our slums and ghettos, and with poor people everywhere, is the Salvation Army. You can always get a meal there, a basket of groceries or a bed, with no questions asked. No other church will do it.

When C.B.S. recently reported to the nation across all its affiliated network stations on the wealth of the church, the report stated in summary that the gross revenues of the churches are greater than after tax incomes of General Motors, American Telephone and Telegraph, Standard Oil, Ford, Texaco and Sears Roebuck combined.

I will repeat that.

The gross revenues of the churches are greater than aftertax incomes of General Motors, American Telephone and Telegraph, Standard Oil, Ford, Texaco and Sears Roebuck combined.

Figures compiled by the Internal Revenue Service of the United States government indicate that donations to churches (not counting income from stock dividends and bond yields, or profits from their businesses) are nine billion dollars a year– in those collection plates. That works out to over $173 million every Sunday. This does not include anything willed to them, either.

That's a pretty costly seat in heaven, you-all are paying for. I just wonder what bank Jesus Christ uses to deposit that money in, or if the money really ever gets up to those pearly gates. It is just possible that it is stopped here somewhere on earth to buy another steel tube plant.

That's all for this evening. I will be with you again next week, same time, same station, same day of the week.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to separation of church and state and currently engaged in an effort to see that churches pay their fair share of the tax burden. You may help us with this effort, or with putting this program on radios in other cities, either by purchasing some of our booklets, records and taps, or by sending a small contribution to us. The information on this program is found in our booklet *Let Us Prey*, which details how the churches prey on the taxpayer. It is available at $2.00 a copy from Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

You may reach us with comments at that address also: again, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Thank you for listening to me this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 17—September 23, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

FEDERAL LAND GIVEAWAYS TO CHURCHES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Would you like to have a little home of your own, with some acreage attached, where you could have a little garden, or a place to be alone? A hunting lodge? A fishing place? Would you like one free?

Well, all you have to do to get this is to become a minister. That's not too hard to do either. You can get a doctor's degree in theology for a range of prices, all fairly cheap. Pick up any pulp magazine and take a correspondence course. If that is not simple enough, get to me and I will see that you get a free ordination as a minister. Ministers need no real education, or training, or background—almost anything will do. Although there are legitimate ministers, as a class they are not government regulated. Once you are equipped, maybe with a tent too, let's see what you can get in the nature of land, free. From whom? From the United States government and the American taxpayer, of course.

How did I find this out? Let me tell you.

Recently the Protestants have been yelling bloody murder over the fact that the Roman Catholic Church has been receiving hand-over-fist money from the United States government, plus land and buildings. They put out a constant stream of propaganda regarding this. The figures which I have had presented to me are shocking.

So, like any good sneaky Atheist, I went to the root of the matter. I wanted to know if land was really given away by our government to sectarian religious groups, and if this was a political giveaway to the most powerful church, politically, and how the whole thing started.

I discovered that it was true that in the Kennedy and the Johnson administrations the Roman Catholic Church, in a pseudo-legal situation, did grab up 724.67 prime acres of land in the United States in Ohio, New York, Illinois, California and Pennsylvania via political

pressuring. The American taxpayer had paid out $13,458,406 for this real estate and had erected two hundred and fifty three buildings on it. That averages out to $18,563 an acre Since the time of the original purchases, the property had risen in value, certainly that on Long Island, New York and in the Chicago, Illinois area. The General Service Administration Agency of the United States, however, reevaluated the land and buildings to be worth about ten million, but then, incredibly, directed the property and the buildings to be sold to the Roman Catholic Church for $324,942.00. This is not even five per cent of its value!

I could see clearly why the Protestants were thundering in god-given righteous anger about all this. Polemics were flowing deeper than the Potomac River and the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, were all roundly denounced in mellow stentorian preacher-like tones from Protestant pulpit after Protestant pulpit across the land.

How could this be, I thought. Who started it all? It took me over a year to find out as first the General Service Agency refused to supply information, and then the Health, Education and Welfare Department, and so did my senators and representatives of the great state of Texas. I had some of our sneaky Atheists pose as good religionists and they got the information for me. It turned out that the Protestants protested too much. They started it back in the early 1940s. They had been so busy stealing public lands under this same pseudo-legal shelter they had devised, that they finally thought that they had an exclusive right to the game. But, when the Roman Catholic Church got into it, that church really taught them how to play.

All of it is very funny and brings to mind a good Protestant-type poem.

Though the mills of God grind slowly,
They grind exceeding small.
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.

–H. W. Longfellow

That I love the poem does not make me religious. It merely shows that I relish justice and the Protestants are getting their just deserts. The sad thing is that it is at the expense of the taxpayer.

The wall of separation of church and state in America has been smashed flat in this deal. Who was there to do it? Judging from the rewards, the records are clear. The Baptist church can probably take credit for this. The breach in the wall probably cannot be repaired.

Greed takes everything with it, including justice. The lesson is driven home: government favors ultimately accrue to the benefit of the religion which can dominate an area or gain a favored position with government, and the Roman Catholic Church is winning that war all over America.

The good Baptists forgot the words of Jefferson when he pleaded for a wall of separation between church and state, and asked that it be built into the principles which underlie our nation. At that time he was proud of what the Revolution had accomplished, and he explained it in this way:

> " . . . the Freemen of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise, and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all of the consequences in the principle and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle."

We have the consequences now. The Baptists breached the principle. That church laid the seed which has resulted in the Roman Catholic harvest and just as Jefferson predicted, the matter is now so strengthened by exercise and so entangled in precedents, that we may never get it cleared.

Let's see just how this land was stolen from the American people —and there is no other possible way of designating it—for everyone involved knew that what was going on was prohibited by our constitution.

Since 1946 the Health, Education and Welfare Department of the United States government has been authorized by a series of acts of Congress to "sell" to sectarian religious groups whatever federal lands and buildings are declared to be surplus by the governmental agencies having their use—to sell this for the health, education and welfare uses of those specific sectarian religious groups.

This land was bought with your money. It was used by the government and when the government had no further use for it, it should properly have been put on the open market and sold so that some of your tax dollars could have been redeemed. Instead, a whole series of incredibly sneaky little acts were passed by Congress which "sold" this land to sectarian religious groups.

I have said "sell" the land, but let's look at the terms of the sale. First the land is valued, and this is done by the General Service Agency in such a fashion as to put the value at the least possible amount. Sometimes "current market value" is used; sometimes "original cost" value is used. Sometimes "depreciation" is so unrealistic that the government finds the buildings of no value at all, since

it took off so much percentage for so many years. The placing of value is completely unrealistic. No person in his right mind who was in the real estate business would do this with any land or any buildings anywhere. The object appears to be to make the property nearly worthless through this appraisal.

Then, after this entire charade is played out, a discount is given to the church and this varies up to ninety five per cent, which is the usual discount. That's right—a ninety five per cent discount. You heard me. I will give you a sample of this in a few moments.

Now, did you give your senator or your representative the right to give away this land, under a flimsy pretense of a sale, to specific religions under the even flimsier guise that it is being used for health, education and welfare purposes, when every instance shows it to be used for sectarian religious purposes?

Let's take an example of the cost of sale. I want to use the Baptists for this is really flagrant. I have the figures here only through 1966. I don't know what they gobbled up in 1967 as yet, but I will get to that too, believe me.

The Baptists received 1,041 acres of land in Washington, Tennessee, the District of Columbia (what! the District of Columbia? How could there be surplus land there? Well, there was. There isn't any more. The good Baptists got it), Florida, Arkansas and good old Texas. The taxpayers bought all this at $10,706,623, which is about $10,285 an acre, and then the government built three hundred and thirty four buildings on it.

The General Service Administration was right in there to value the land at $3,591,007 for the transfer. But, those boys up in Washington are smart. They took one good hard look at the solid South and the votes it carries and what a good healthy influence that good old Baptist church is down in that good old solid South, and the kindly Health, Education and Welfare Department gave every pea-pickin' inch of that land away, and all those buildings, *free*, to the Baptists, over ten million dollars worth to the Baptists who are champions of separation of church and state.

The Baptists yell about separation of church and state constantly, but in these many instances of transfer of land and buildings to them, land and buildings which were owned by the people, they never said a word about separation. We have other churches in America who claim to champion separation of church and state with their right hand, while they reach for that taxpayer dollar with their left hand. That's a biblical admonition straight from Jesus Christ (*Matthew* 6:3) "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand

doeth . . ." and the boys in the churches take that literally.

You take the Seventh Day Adventists. They run a hard line of separation of church and state. Their magazine *Liberty* is dedicated to this concept. They hit it as an editorial line constantly. So guess which hog went to the trough most often. You guessed it. About every third entry in this giveaway is noted "S.D.A.," which means Seventh Day Adventists. They took 1,044.5 acres with three hundred thirty one buildings on that land, in Florida, California, Ohio and Arizona. I wrote to the editor of *Liberty* magazine and asked him why his church had taken the liberty to do this and why their magazine did not tell their own members and the American people that they are preaching one thing and practicing another. He never answered.

You, dear taxpayer, put out $2,638,156 for this land and the General Service Administration evaluated it at the ridiculous figure of $713,706, in order to accommodate the Adventists, and then the Health, Education and Welfare Department sold it to the Seventh Day Adventists for $60,079.00. This is a "sale?"

Anyone can play this game. Go get a minister's ordination certificate and try it. If you don't believe me, the list is long: the Presbyterian Church, the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Assembly of God, the Congregationalists, the Garden of the King Enterprise (what's that? The Garden of the King? Certainly! Just claim you are a church and you have it made). There are some more that you have never heard of too. Ready? Moravian Church of America, the Mennonites, the Gospel Mission Church, the Jewish Talmudical Society, the Light and Life Christian Church, the Western Bible Institute, the Japanese Holiness Church, the Assembly of God, the Brethren in Christ Church, the Church of the Nazarene, the Berean Mission Church, the Disciples of Christ, the Pilgrim Holiness Church. Oh, the list is long.

Did you ever hear of these laws before today? Did your United States representative or senator tell you he was going to give this land away in this fashion? Did anyone bother about separation of church and state and the Constitution of the United States when these deals were pulled? Did your newspaper report it? Did you hear it on this radio station or any other? Did you see a report about it on television? Did anyone inform you, much less ask your permission?

Ah, but the screeches come now, because the Protestants who started this entire thing see it rolling right into Roman Catholic hands. Oh, now for the Protestants this is unfair, dishonorable,

one-church favoritism, and so on.

Do you know what I think? It is nothing of the kind. This is the kettle calling the pot black. The Roman Catholics would be getting nothing if the Protestants had not started the game. I notice that the outraged cries of the Protestants are not such that they include any notice when they still pick up a parcel of land or two or some spare buildings, for this land giveaway continues merrily on its way.

When are you going to stop it, taxpayer? If you won't stop it, or can't, will you help the Society of Separationists to stop it? If we bring a suit to halt this, will you help with a check for our legal costs? Let me know. Our address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Meanwhile, I will be back with you next week, same time, same station, same day of the week for a little more on separation of church and state and the abuses thereof everywhere in America, abuses that cost you tax dollars.

This information on today's program is available in a forty five page booklet, *Let us Prey*, (P-R-E-Y) which we sell for two dollars, available from the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 18—September 30, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

TWO CURRENT COURT DECISIONS ON SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

This summer, in late June, the United States Supreme Court ruled on two very vital cases in respect to separation of church and state and agreed to take up two other vital cases when it convenes this fall.

Since my sponsor, the Society of Separationists, is especially concerned with separation of church and state in America, it is necessary for us to take a look at these cases.

The Roman Catholic Church in America, which is inalterably opposed to the concept of church/state separation, won one of its biggest victories it has ever had in the history of America, and it was not even a litigant in either case.

How did this come about?

The two cases are known as the Flast Case and the Allen Case. They both came out of New York. In the first, the Flast Case, the issue was simply: may a taxpayer bring suit against the U.S. government to question its expenditure of tax monies, or is the interest of a single taxpayer so small, so infinitesimal, that there is no serious challenge? Back in 1921, the Frothingham v. Mellon Case had established the premise that no taxpayer could question the expenditures of the federal government because a single taxpayer had such a small interest in the total tax money spent. The object of the Flast Case was to overcome this famous Frothingham decision which had been the law of the land for forty seven years, and to overcome it specifically in the case of First Amendment lawsuits.

In the Flast case, the First Amendment was introduced as a new aspect when the issue was brought specifically to the idea of separation of church and state, for in this case the petitioners were saying 1) that they did have standing to sue as taxpayers and 2) that federal aid to parochial schools for textbooks and other items was a breach

of the First Amendment and the principle of separation of church and state.

The Supreme Court, in ruling on the Flast Case, held that in First Amendment cases the taxpayer did have the standing to sue, or the right to come into court, even though he was a single taxpayer. The decision, however, scrupulously avoided saying anything about the money going to parochial schools under the Federal Aid to Education Acts. It remanded (returned) the case to a New York court and indicated that as a guideline several factors must be determined in such cases. First, taxpayers must be able to show a logical link between their status as taxpayers and the type of legislative enactments (that means laws) which are being attacked. That requirement alone shows the obtuse thinking of the court, for this link should be obvious. Two, taxpayers must show that the taxing or spending programs violate a specific constitutional limitation upon those powers. Well, the First Amendment is not written in "specific limiting terms." The decision showed that general attacks would not be allowed. The decision, written by Chief Justice Earl Warren, is long, complicated, confusing and often obscure in its reasoning. It does not make clear if the decision is based on constitutional issues, on rules of equity, or on the rules (or moods) of the court, or its members. The court *did* make it clear that it was in no mood to entertain a number of tax suits. The Johnson administration was a big factor in the court for the Solicitor General of the United States, Erwin N. Griswold, appeared on behalf of the government against Flast. The U.S. government did not want taxpayers to be able to sue. The ruling was explicit in its silence about anyone possibly winning such a suit even if they could get into court.

But when the Allen Case was ruled on, the issue was clarified forever and ever, amen. The Roman Catholic Church would be the winner in any case which ever got to the court on the basis of the Flast decision.

The Allen Case involved a taxpayer's challenge against the State of New York which, under Roman Catholic political pressures, had enacted a law which gave twenty five million dollars worth of textbooks each year to parochial (private) schools in New York State. The decision by the Supreme Court was six to three that this was *not* a violation of separation of church and state. The three dissenters were Abe Fortas, Hugo Black and William Douglas. Black was furious in his dissent. "This is . . . a flagrant, open violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments . . . " He noted that the majority decision, " . . . bodes nothing but evil to religious peace in this coun-

try," and went on to say that "I still subscribe to the belief that tax-raised funds cannot be used to support religious schools, buy their school books, erect their buildings, pay their teachers, or pay any other of their maintenance expenses, even to the extent of one penny."

The Flast Case had to do with the federal funds which are being poured into parochial schools. The Allen Case had to do with state money which is going into such schools. You may not know that these schools are getting help financially from every level of government which can be influenced by the church.

I want to stop here to give you two examples of such aid and what can and does happen. The Roman Catholic Providence College in Rhode Island received a grant of one million dollars for its library; then immediately used $600,000 to buy the site of Elmhurst Academy, another Roman Catholic concern.

Roman Catholic Webster College in Missouri receives $350,000 annually from the federal government *in one category alone*, and it has only nine hundred and fifty students.

Now, I want to start an Atheist college. I would love to have the United States government give me $350,000 a year just from one granting agency. Do you suppose, if I asked, they would do it?

This has been covered in a prior broadcast when we quoted Justice Douglas in one case where he noted that the church is an organic whole, a living organism, which is strengthened in any department by contributions from other than its own members, and the surest way to establish it strongly is to finance it in this manner.

Of course the Roman Catholic Church was jubilant. The Right Reverend George A. Kelly, Secretary for Education in the Roman Catholic archdiocese of New York, called it a "magna carta" for Roman Catholic education in America, and, of course, he is correct. The Jesuit magazine *America* predicted that this would be the great beginning of a reevaluation of church-state separation cases heretofore decided by the United States Supreme Court. Roman Catholic papers everywhere headlined the event (we subscribe to all of the papers) and Roman Catholic bishops cheerfully reaffirmed a prior forecast that their needs for public funds from the federal government *alone* would run about eight billion dollars a year in the not too distant future. All the Roman Catholic magazines were ecstatic at the victory they felt they so richly (!) deserved.

A ten per cent surcharge was put on you effective July 15, 1967, when the churches were only receiving sixteen million dollars a day in federal tax money alone. The increase that the Roman Catholic

bishops want will cost you a mere twenty two million dollars a day more–thirty eight million dollars a day in a federal subsidy to religion in the land which gave birth to the idea of separation of church and state.

The New York Times newspaper was aghast at the decision. The paper stated that religious freedom itself is at stake and that the entire "separation of church and state principle is in danger, now, of being *swept away.*" *The New York Times* is hardly an hysterical newspaper in its editorial columns, but it labelled this as a "retreat" from the American principle of church/state separation in the title of the editorial. It called for subsequent tests to be brought before the courts to examine and protect fundamental principles, because there is a growing need for this protection.

Many people feel that the Roman Catholic Church should not get these sums of money for their schools, their teachers, their books, their programs, their buildings, their maintenance, but I am not so certain about that for this is a community of persons who are dedicated to what they are doing, including using your tax money to advance their religious ideas. But they are organized. They are informed. They are concentrating on a religious-political battle to obtain the ends they desire. They contribute money freely to attain their goals. They devote energy, time and work to this cause. They are dedicated. They use intelligence, patience, time, money and planning to the end of obtaining that which they feel to be desirable and right.

This church has even gone so far as to have a Madalyn Murray expert developed. Everywhere I appear he is flown in to oppose me. When I appear on radio or television, he demands equal time. When we last appeared on the Mike Douglas show he said, "Well, Madalyn, we appear to be playing the Dating Game. Maybe we should try to get on that show together too." He has met and opposed me in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and I expect him to show up on the show following this one some night. I feel it is rather decent of that church to get an expert on me. He is a Jesuit Ph.D. and teaches at one of their major universities. He calls himself 'Father.' I don't accept the title 'father' in this respect and I call him 'Mister,' but we get on rather famously together. I like him and he keeps shaking his head and saying to me, "Oh, if only we could get you on our side."

But the lesson is that this church is everywhere, trying all the time, even to assigning someone to Madalyn Murray.

We must be getting back to the Flast and Allen Cases. The *Times*

may not be far off in its determination that religious freedom is itself at stake, for where federal funds go, there follows control.

The U.S. Supreme Court, this month of June, also agreed to take on two other cases in which the members of that body agreed to look at church dogma, usually a forbidden area for any secular body or court. The first such case is that of Dr. Timothy Leary who has appealed from a drug possession and use charge on the contention that he was using the marijuana for a religious experience. The second case has to do with two Presbyterian churches in Georgia and their parent body, the Presbyterian Church of the United States. The two churches charge the parent church with "revolutionary, fundamental, unlawful and radical diversion from the Presbyterian Church."

The two Georgia churches want to secede and take their property with them. Ah! There is the rub. Money is involved, but nonetheless, the United States Supreme Court is confronted with the problem of dogma and if that dogma has been violated. We think the parent church would care less if property of considerable sum was not involved, but it is. We will watch these two cases also, very closely.

If you want to reverse this tide of battle, you will have to support those organizations fighting for separation of church and state or else, don't complain if you lose the war. You can join us by writing to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Meanwhile, I will be with you next week, same day, same time, same station. If you care for further information on this, we put out a monthly newsletter, and this program was excerpted from our June 1968 issue. Just write to my sponsor, Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to maintaining the separation of church and state. The address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 19—October 7, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

CONTRADICTIONS IN THE BIBLE

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

A number of people have said to me, "Ah! We notice that you leave the Bible strictly alone. We believe that this is because you cannot answer it since it is god's word."

I have not talked about the Bible in this series as yet for one very simple reason. The Bible is such an easy book to cut to ribbons that it does not take a person like me to do it for you. You can do it all by your lonesome. I will take up the history of the Bible and the apocryphal works later in this series. I have fun with the Bible.

Just to let you see some of what passes for the lord's words, I have a Bible here tonight and I will flip it open to any page and see what happens. You can play this game too if you know the book well enough. Ready?

Let's start out with *Genesis,* 1:31. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." It seems that god was satisfied with his work. However, let's look at *Genesis* 6:6. "And, it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him in his heart." So apparently god was not satisfied with his works. People have died over this doctrine, which is contradictory in the Bible itself.

There are several basic tenets in Christianity. One of these is that god appeared on earth and gave directions and instructions to his people. Let's look at this. *Exodus* 23:11. "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Now, let's look at *John* 1:18. "No man hath seen God at any time." *Genesis* 32:30. "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." *Exodus* 32:20. "And He said, 'Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live.' "

Let's try *Isaiah* on this (6:1) "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw, also, the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." And now, *I Timothy* 6:16, "Whom no man hath seen nor can see." Then

there is *Genesis* 3:9-10, "And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him 'Where art thou?' and he said. 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,' " as compared to *John* 5:37, "Ye hath neither heard His voice, at any time, nor seen His shape."

But the very funniest one of all is when god does something almost unmentionable. *Exodus* 32:23, "And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts." !

Probably the quotation that most preachers use most often is *Matthew* 19:26. "With God, all things are possible." But they are not, for in *Judges* 1:19 we see this: "And the Lord was with Judah, and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron." !

I am talking here about only theological doctrines in the Bible. Another tenet of the church is that *if you seek god* you will be saved. *Matthew* 7:8, "Everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth." But, in *Proverbs* 1:28, "Then shall they call upon me but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but shall not find me." And in *Isaiah* 1:15, "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make prayers I will not hear." This is not just a threat, for he did it–*Psalms* 18:41, "They called, but there was none to save them; even unto the Lord, but he answered them not."

We hear about peace, and how god is a god of peace. In *Romans* 15:33 he is called just that, "The God of peace." But in *Exodus* 15:3 he is called, "The Lord, a man of war." Also in *I Timothy* 2:4 we hear that god is one "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," but in *Jeremiah* 13:14 he says, "I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them" So, we have *Psalms* 145:9, "The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works." Compare that to *I Samuel* 15:2-3, where the lord said, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling." At one point god was so full of fury that David finally questioned him in *I Samuel* 24:17, "And David spake unto the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, 'Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done?"

The problem of how a good, kind and loving god could really ever have created evil is one with which theologians have much trouble and they argue that god could not and would not create evil. They just don't know their Bible at all, do they, for in *Isaiah* 45:7 it is

very plain. "I make peace *and I create evil.* I, the Lord, do all these things." What can be more clear than that?

Sometimes you fall into errors of the soul and your minister tells you that god tempted you, for he can do this as is cited in *Genesis* 22:1, "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham." Yet, *James* 1:13 says this never happened, for it says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted of God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." So, tell me when some of you pray, then, why you ask god not to tempt you, as in *Matthew* 6:13 where the lord's prayer is given, "Lead us not into temptation."

We constantly have the argument as to whether there is one god or a trinity, or even more than that. *Deuteronomy* 6:4 says, "The Lord our God is one Lord," and *I Corinthians* 8:4 says, "There is none other God but one." Who can account, then, for god saying, "Let *us* make man in *our* image," in *Genesis* 1:26 and in 3:22 saying, "Behold that man is becoming as one of *us*" and even further that, "the sons of God saw the daughters of men were fair and took them as wives," in *Genesis* 6:2.

It is all rather confusing, isn't it?

Talk about the eyes of Texas being upon you, according to *Proverbs* 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place" and in *Job* 34:21, "For His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings." Well, don't worry about that too much, for in *Genesis* 3:8, "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden and He could not see them and had to call out to them." He did not even know what was going on when the Tower of Babel was built until in *Genesis* 6:5, he "came down to see the city and the tower." Worse yet, he did not know of the goings-on in Sodom and Gemorrah and musing to himself in *Genesis* 28:21, said, "I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know."

God is even supposed to know what is in the hearts of men. *Acts* 1:24 affirms this, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men." This is repeated in *Psalms* 44:21, "For He knoweth the secrets of the heart." Yet, in *Deuteronomy* 8:2, the lord admits he does not know, for he says, "The Lord thy God led thee forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, *to know what was in thy heart."*

Sometimes people get quite angry with me and say, "You are trying to prove that god is a liar." They quote *Hebrews* 6:18, "It was

impossible for God to lie." Then, I have to ask them why he did so, for he himself said in *Ezekial* 14:9, "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet." Jeremiah was so angry with the lord that he faced him with it saying in *Jeremiah* 4:10, "Ah, Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people." And in even greater anguish in *Jeremiah* 15:18 he says, "Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar?"

You can all see the contradictions and absurdities in this, particularly between the Old Testament and the New Testament. So let's spend a few moments on the New Testament alone. Let's try a few chapters of *John*. "I and my father are one," (10:30) as compared to, "My Father is greater than I," (14:28). Then, in the words of Christ, *John* 5:22, 30, "The father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the son. As I hear, I judge." And then later in *John* 8:15, Jesus contradicts himself and says, "I judge no man," and again later in *John* 12:47, "If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I come not to judge the world, but to save the world."

We hear that the Christian yoke is easy, and in *Matthew* 11:28-30 the admonition is, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I shall give you rest. Take my yoke upon you... *for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*" But *II Timothy* 3:12 tells all and sundry that, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution," and this is confirmed in *John* 16:35, for there it says that "In this world ye shall have tribulation." What do you believe?

Recently we have heard a lot about the Roman Catholic Church officially absolving the Jews from the burden or onus of having put Christ to death. Yet in two chapters of *John* one right after the other (18 and 19) we have two different fact situations. In *John* 18:7 when Pilate supposedly asked the Jews a question in respect to their laws, "The Jews therefore said unto him, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Yet, in the next chapter (19:31) when the same question is asked, the answer is, "The Jews therefore said unto him, 'We have a law and by our law he ought to die.' "

I have been talking here tonight about theological precepts only in the Bible. I have broken the contradictions and the absurdities down into several categories: the theological doctrines, the moral precepts, the historical facts, the speculative doctrines. Another evening we can go into these in greater depth and into a history of the Bible if you want to do so.

I rather feel that this is beating a dead horse. Everyone has a Bible

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in his home. No one reads it. Ministers would never go over any of these obvious contradictions with you. It often has been said that you can prove anything by the Bible. I think I have illustrated that tonight. One page says one thing, another page contradicts it. My suggestion to you is, pick up the Bible and read it. More Atheists come from this exercise than any other single thing.

That is all for this evening. I will be back with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. My sponsor is the Society of Separationists. We are financed by the sale of booklets, records, tapes and by gifts which you may send to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. We welcome your correspondance. Tonight we are featuring a booklet titled *Religious Beliefs of Scientific Americans*. A sociological investigation was made of scientists in America and you will be startled to see what they believe. The booklet is one dollar. The address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 20—October 14, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin Texas

ROBERT INGERSOLL, A SAMPLING

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I have told you briefly about Robert Ingersoll, who was a kind of high priest of non-belief in the last half of the last century in America. He toured America to lecture and he was prolific in his writings.

His granddaughter is alive today in New York City, although she is old and ill. She is a member of our Society of Separationists, as is Sherman Wakefield, her husband. She is Eva Ingersoll Wakefield. Sherman is a non-belief scholar and writer and has given me permission to cite Robert Ingersoll from certain of his verified works, and to use his own (Sherman Wakefield's) writings on these programs. I am happy and proud to be associated with Ingersoll's granddaughter and her husband.

There is so much of Colonel Bob Ingersoll to cite, which is just as contemporary today as when he wrote it, that I get rather excited about the prospect. Some of his poems are *so* beautiful with the simplicity and impact of truth, and truth hits us in the belly, doesn't it? We recognize it anywhere, in any time, under any set of circumstances. Bob Ingersoll wrote a poem entitled *IF* and it is very famous in our freethought world. Here it is:

IF

If Cathedrals had been Universities,
If Dungeons of the Inquisition had been Laboratories,
If Christians had believed in Character instead of Creed,
If they had taken from the Bible only that which is GOOD
and thrown away the wicked and absurd,
If Temple domes had been Observatories,
If Priests had been Philosophers,
If Missionaries had taught useful arts instead of Bible lore,
If Astrology had been Astronomy,
If the Black Arts had been Chemistry,
If Superstition had been Science,

If Religion had been Humanity
The world would be a heaven filled with love, and liberty and joy.

Bob Ingersoll was able to state succinctly and exactly what is in the hearts and minds of Atheists, and what we believe should be in every man's heart, when he wrote five lines we love him for:

Happiness is the only good;
Reason the only torch;
Justice is the only worship;
Humanity the only religion
and
Love the only priest.

He could have an incredibly sharp tongue, too! "Ministers say that they teach charity. This is natural. They live on alms. All beggars teach that others should give." And, about god and communicable or contagious diseases he quipped: "If I were god, I would make health catching, instead of disease."

You have all seen little bookends of "Praying Hands" and wall plaques of them and pictures of them, but Ingersoll would scoff at this, for he said almost a hundred years ago:

The hands that help are better far
Than lips that pray.
Love is the ever gleaming star
That leads the way.

Women Atheists especially respect our Bob Ingersoll because he loved his wife, and he said so, in an age when women were chattels. He stood up for us and over and over again he admonished all who would listen, "It is far more important to love your wife than to love God, and I will tell you why: you cannot help him–but you can help her."

Atheists are always attacked by the religious community with the scoff of "What have you done for humanity?" and Robert Ingersoll, in a very famous speech, gave the answer. He liked to call Atheists "Infidels," and that speech is entitled *What Infidels Have Done*, by Robert Ingersoll.

"One hundred years after Christ had died suppose someone had asked a Christian, "What hospitals have you built?" "What hospitals have you founded?" They would have said, "None."

Suppose three hundred years after the death of Christ the same question had been asked the Christian, he would have said, "None,–not one."

Two hundred years more and the answer would have been the same. And, at that time, the Christian could have told the questioner that the Mohammedans had built asylums before the Christians. He could also have told him that there had been orphan asylums in China for hundreds and hundreds of years. Hospitals in India there were, and hospitals for the sick at Athens—but none built by Christians.

Here it may be well enough to say that all hospitals and asylums are not built for charity. They are built because people do not want to be annoyed by the sick and the insane. If a sick man should come down the street and sit upon *your* doorstep, you would have to take him into your house or leave him to suffer. Private families do not wish to take the burden of the sick. Consequently, in self defense, hospitals are built so that any wanderer coming to a house dying, or suffering from any disease, may be immediately packed off to a hospital and to become a burden upon private charity. The fact that many diseases are contagious rendered hospitals necessary for the preservation of the lives of the citizens. The same thing is true of the asylums. People do not, as a rule, want to take into their families all the children who have no fathers and mothers. So they endow and build an asylum where those children can be sent—and where they can be whipped according to law. Nobody wants an insane stranger in his house. The consequence is that the community, to get rid of these people, to get rid of the trouble, build public institutions and send them there.

Now then, to come to the point, to answer the interrogatory often flung at us from the pulpit. What institutions have Infidels built? In the first place, there have not been many Infidels (who could survive) for many years, and, as a rule, a known Infidel cannot get very rich, for the reason that the Christians are so forgiving and loving that they boycott him. *If the average Infidel, freely stating his opinions, could get through the world himself, for the last several hundred years, he has been in good luck.* But, as a matter of fact, there have been some infidels who have done some good, even from a Christian standpoint. The greatest charity ever established in the United States by a man, not by a community to get rid of a nuisance, but by a man who wished to do good and wished that good to last

after his death, is the Girard College in the city of Philadelphia. Girard was an Infidel. He gained his first publicity by going like a common person into the hospitals and taking care of those suffering from contagious diseases–from cholera and smallpox. So there is a man by the name of James Lick, an Infidel, who has given the finest observatory ever given to the world. And it is a good thing for an Infidel to increase the sight of men. The reason that people are theologians is because they cannot see. Mr. Lick has increased human vision, and I can say right here, that nothing has been seen through the telescope calculated to prove the astronomy of Joshua. Neither can you see with that telescope a star that bears a Christian name. The reason is that Christianity was opposed to astronomy. So astronomers took their revenge and now there is not one star that glitters in all the vast firmament of the boundless heavens that has a Christian name. Mr. Carnegie has been what they call a public spirited man. He has given millions of dollars for libraries and other institutions, and he certainly is not an orthodox Christian.

Infidels, however, have done much better even than that. They have increased the sum of human knowledge. John W. Draper (American scientist and writer), in his work on *The Intellectual Development of Europe*, has done more good to the American people and to the civilized world than all the priests in it. He was an Infidel. Buckle (an English historian) is another who has added to the sum of human knowledge. Thomas Paine, an Infidel, did more for this country than any other man who ever lived in it.

Most of the colleges in this country have, I admit, been founded by Christians, and the money for their support has been donated by Christians, but most of the colleges of this country have simply classified ignorance, and I think the United States would be more learned than it is today if there never had been a Christian college in it. But whether Christians gave or Infidels gave has nothing to do with the probability of the Jonah story or with the probability that the mark on the dial went back ten degrees to prove that a little Jewish king was not going to die of a boil. And if the Infidels are all stingy and the Christians are all generous, it does not even tend to prove that three men were in a fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than was its wont–

without even scorching their clothes.

The best college in this country, or at least for the long time the best, was the institution founded by Ezra Cornell. That is a school where people try to teach what they know instead of what they guess. Yet Cornell University was attacked by every orthodox college in the United States at the time it was founded, because they said it was without religion.

Everybody knows that Christianity does not tend to generosity. Christianity says: "Save your own soul, whether anyone else saves his or not." Christianity says: "Let the great ship go down. You get into the little lifeboat of the gospel and paddle ashore, no matter what becomes of the rest." Christianity says you must love God or something in the sky, better than you love your wife and children. And the Christian, even when giving, expects to get a very large compound interest in another world. The Infidel who gives, asks no return except the joy that comes from relieving the want of another.

Again, the Christians, although they have built colleges, have built them for the purpose of spreading their superstitions, and have poisoned the minds of the world, while the Infidel teachers have filled the world with light. Darwin did more for mankind than if he had built a thousand hospitals. Voltaire did more than if he had built a thousand asylums for the insane. He will prevent thousands from going insane that otherwise might be driven into insanity by the "glad tidings of great joy." Haeckel (German biologist and philosopher) is filling the world with light.

I am perfectly willing that the results of the labors of Christians and the labors of Infidels should be compared. Then let it be understood that Infidels have been able to survive in this world but a very short time. A few years ago there were hardly any (who could be identified). I can remember when I was the only Infidel in the town where I lived. Give us time, and we will build colleges in which something will be taught that is of use. We hope to build temples which will be dedicated to reason and common sense, and where every effort will be made to reform mankind and make men better and better in this world.

I am saying nothing against the charity of Christians, nothing against any kindness or goodness. But I say the

Christians, in my judgment, have done more harm than they have done good. They may talk of the asylums they have built, but they have not built asylums enough to hold the people who have been driven insane by their teachings. Orthodox religion has opposed liberty. It has opposed investigation and freethought. If all the churches in Europe had been observatories, where facts were taught and where nature was studied, if all the priests had been real teachers, the world would have been far, far beyond what it is today.

There is an idea that Christianity is positive, and infidelity is negative. If this be so, then falsehood is positive and truth is negative. What I contend is that infidelity is positive religion; that Christianity is a negative religion. Christianity denies and infidelity admits. Infidelity stands by facts; it demonstrates by the conclusions of reason. Infidelity does all it can to develop the brain and the heart of man. That is positive. Religion asks man to give up this world for one he knows nothing about. That is negative. I stand by the religion of reason. I stand by the dogmas of demonstration."

That was one of the most famous of the Ingersoll essays.

This program is sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the concept of separation of church and state.

We would indeed appreciate your help toward making this program available to other radio stations in other cities, and to this end, a gift from you for that purpose can be sent to the Society of Separationists, or to Madalyn Murray, at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

We sell booklets, pamphlets, records, and we will soon have available the tapes of these broadcasts. All information is available by writing to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas;

Meanwhile, I will be back with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Thank you for listening this evening and a very good night to you.

Program 21—October 21, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE SOCIETY OF SEPARATIONISTS— AIMS AND PURPOSES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

For some time I have been telling you that I intend to go over the aims and purposes of my sponsor, the Society of Separationists, so that you will fully understand our *raison d'etre*—our reason for being.

My boss, the Society of Separationists, which is headed up by my boss, Richard F. O'Hair, my husband (who is also my boss in another way), has told me that if I don't get to the Society of Separationists tonight, I may well find myself without a sponsor, in addition to the mayhem I may find myself encountering both in our office and in our home.

Taking this gentle hint, after having twenty broadcasts wherein I have just rattled on, perhaps I should take time tonight to acquaint you with the Society of Separationists.

First, it is a non-profit, non-political, educational organization. It is located with central headquarters in Austin, Texas. It is a national and an international organization. We have associates in all fifty states of the United States of America, and more friends in Mexico, Canada, Spain, England, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Sweden, Ireland and in Viet Nam. We have state directors in eighteen states of the United States—in California, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Nevada, South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Iowa, Michigan.

We don't have membership. We rather have persons who are associates of ours. We can't keep a regular count because we are growing every day, but I can give you an estimate. We have about 28,000 associates right now. We think this is very good since we are only two years and ten months old.

We have two regular publications. They are a newsletter which goes out monthly, and we call it just that—*Newsletter*. And there is a

quarterly magazine which we get out once every quarter of the year, that is, every three months. When my husband married me, his mother said, "Oh, Poor Richard," and so we have named the magazine *Poor Richard's Reports.* I will give you an aside here on my husband's and my religious uprearings. His parents were Quakers and he was reared as a Quaker. When he married a Roman Catholic girl he was forced to take instructions in that church before he could have the girl of his choice, and he had to convert to please her and her church. He did that. But, he never was a Roman Catholic at heart and he got to the point that he attended mass once every fifteen years. Currently he has not been in a Roman Catholic church for about thirty years. He still knows much more about the Quakers than he ever knew about the Roman Catholic church. I was reared in the Presbyterian Church and my mother was a Lutheran, although she never went to that church after she married Dad. So between us, Richard and I have intimate knowledge about Quakers, Lutherans, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians.

Well, that was a long way around to tell you that *Poor Richard's Reports* is our magazine. We try to fill this with news items mostly about church idiocies and activities calculated to make you boiling mad when you read about them. We have articles by Atheists, poems, news reports, letters to the editor, cartoons and a young people's section when we have contributions to it.

What's the price of all this? Well, we really don't put a pricetag on it. Some of them we give away—but let me warn you—not to everyone, only to those bona fide olf Atheists who are down on their luck. Any time we get a small gift to our legal fund or our radio fund or to our general maintenance, we send the material out of a sense of appreciation and because we don't want anything for nothing. We try to give a return.

Let me tell you a little about our members. They live mostly in small communities and our mailing list sounds quite peculiar to anyone's ears because the towns are like—well, I will give you some examples: Long Meadow, Massachusetts; Meredith, Rhode Island; Naugatuck, Connecticut; Bloomingdale, New Jersey; Burnt Hills, New York; Punksautawney, Pennsylvania; Oxon Hills, Maryland; Alexandria, Virginia; Boone, North Carolina, and in Texas we have people in Grape Vine, Tyler, Gramercy, Edinburg, Canadian and Kingsland.

Our oldest member is ninety three. He lives in Illinois. Many of our members are in their eighties and seventies. We have two organizations of teenagers, both in New York, and their ages are from

fourteen to sixteen, and anyone over that age is too old for them. We have a large contingent of followers in the military and they are in Germany and many of them are in Viet Nam. The largest percentage of members by occupation is medical doctors. For some reason the veterinarians come next. We can't figure that out. We have a good number of psychiatrists in our organization.

We don't particularly like Atheists who convert from the really wild religions, because they become wild Atheists, and we are not like that. Once a person is bitten by the Atheism bug, that person stays an Atheist for the rest of his or her life. It is very rarely that an Atheist ever lapses back into religion.

If we tried to meet scientific research criteria about Atheists, we would have much information to give. Our average member is about forty five years old and has about two children. About ten per cent come from Atheist homes and we have one women who is a fifth generation Atheist. Isn't that wonderful! We are chock full of ex-Baptists and ex-Jews and ex-Episcopalians, and ex-Catholics and ex-Seventh Day Adventists. Anyone who grew up in any religious orphan home is almost certain to become an Atheist. We have quite a few of them and they hate nuns with a passion.

We have lawyers. We have housewife women. Among the college groups I am a national heroine. We don't count these young people, but if we did, it would push our associates to a hundred thousand, because everywhere I go I am mobbed by them. The young people coming up now have absolutely repudiated the god idea. This repudiation has been a personal experience with them, based on their own personal life experiences and what they have experienced *vis-a-vis* religion.

We have a lot of political convictions represented. About forty per cent of our associates are Republicans. About ten per cent are Birchites. About twenty per cent are the so-called Left in America and about forty per cent are Democrats. I am surprised how much Wallace literature I am getting too. Atheism has nothing to do with any political conviction in America. Anyone anywhere is just as liable to be an Atheist as not.

The national office is quite a large one here in Austin, Texas, and we receive much mail addressed merely to "Atheists", Austin, Texas. We are trying to be totally self contained so that any boycotts against us will be ineffective. We have our own printing plant and within another month will have radio taping facilities in our own offices which will equal or exceed any taping facilities at any major radio station in America. We have our own direct mail plant. We

have all automated equipment. We have difficulty trying to find qualified employees, only because everyone has that difficulty these days.

We do plan many major law suits, but we took two years out to organize the Society so that we would have a strong base and many supporters throughout America. Atheists have the biggest underground movement in America. They are everywhere.

Now, let's get down to our aims and purposes which are in our Constitution and Bylaws. There are seven aims of the Society of Separationists. These aims are predicated on a certain philosophy and a definition of freethought. Let me first give you the definition of freethought which we use with our organization, officially, in our Constitution. Freethought may be defined as the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of reason and aims at establishing a system of philosophy and ethics verifiable by experience, independent of all arbitrary assumptions of authority or creed. That is what we think freethought is and how we use that term to serve as a basis for our organization.

Now this is all based on what we call Atheist materialist philosophy. We feel that this Atheist materialist philosophy declares that the cosmos is devoid of imminent conscious purpose, that it is governed by its own inherent, immutable and impersonal law, that there is no supernatural interference in human life, that man, finding his resources within himself, can and must create his own destiny, and that his potential for good and higher development is, for all practical purposes, unlimited.

Working on this philosophy and on this definition of freethought, we have gone further and made certain commitments in respect to our Society of Separationists, and we call these the aims of the Society of Separationists. There are seven of them. You can receive a copy of these definitions and aims by writing to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin Texas. They are:

I. To promote freedom of thought and inquiry concerning religious belief, creeds, dogmas, tenets, rituals and practices.

(You can see from the material which I have discussed already on this program that we really have not got into a study of religious belief, creeds, dogmas, rituals and so on. We have a long way to go, for the history of these is included in the discussion of each. We will be doing this researching later in this series of programming).

II. To collect and disseminate information, data and literature on all religions and promote a thorough understanding of them, their origins and history.

We were quite pleased to be contacted by a man who is about eighty years old who lives in a small town near Austin, Texas. It seems that he has been an Atheist for about sixty five years and has collected a great deal of information in respect to the freethought movement. We were quite excited that he offered it to us. We visited with him and his sister several times and this week he delivered to us quite a stack of very ancient, very old and yellowed books and magazines about Atheism and freethought in America. We are especially thrilled with this and you will be hearing some of the information from his documents (a neighbor of yours) who has been an Atheist for more than half a century *without letting anyone know about it.*

That is all I have time for tonight. I will continue this discussion about the Society of Separationists next week, same time, same station, same day of the week. Meantime, we would appreciate any kind of help that you can give in the form of a gift in order to help us to bring this series of radio programs to other cities. We will soon have available the tapes of these programs for resale if you would desire to have them.

Any correspondence, requests for literature, may be addressed to the Society of Separationists, or Madalyn Murray, at this station. I do also make appearances and here in Austin have been invited to speak at many luncheon engagements. Just drop a line. We want you to know us and we want to know you better. You will find out how reasonable Atheists really are and, we think, how nice, too!

We sell records, booklets, tapes (soon), and we can put you on the mailing list for the *Newsletter* and *Poor Richard's Reports* too. Just send to the Society of Separationists, Austin, Texas, P.O. Box 2117. If you believe as we do, even a dollar helps.

Thank you for listening tonight, and a very good night to you.

Program 22–October 28, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

A LIST OF PRACTICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, NONE OF WHICH IS BIBLE-SUPPORTED

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Last week I attempted to present to you the Society of Separationists, with the aims, purposes and goals which it has, and with some history of the society and a definition of its general activities and membership.

There are seven purposes or aims for the Society of Separationists and I talked about two of them last week. The first of them was to promote freedom of thought and inquiry concerning religious belief, creeds, dogmas, tenets and rituals and practices.

The second was to collect and disseminate information, data, education and literature on all religions and to promote, through a thorough understanding of them, their origins and histories. We come to these in various ways, most frequently in the public libraries and university libraries, but once in a while through other means.

While I was on a trip to Salt Lake City I came upon a great granddaughter of the founder of the Mormon Church and she has provided me with an enormous amount of material in relation to the history of that church. And, so it goes. You will be hearing about all of these things in the series of radio broadcasts which we have now. I plan to give you certain examples of what we do find later in this broadcast.

The third aim of our society is to advocate, labor for and promote, in all lawful ways, the complete separation of church and state and the establishment and maintenance of a thoroughly secular system of education available to all. I want to emphasize that we stand for doing this in all *lawful* ways. We mean by this that we have had our windows broken, but we don't go and break church windows. We have been beaten by Christians, but we have yet to beat up a minister, a rabbi, a priest or a nun. We have had terrible economic reprisals taken against us, but we don't advocate that an economic

blockade be put on the H.E.B. Stores (for instance) simply because much of their profit goes to religion. We have an emphasis on *all lawful ways.* We work in all lawful ways, open and above board. We do this because I am an attorney and I recognize the importance of the legal framework of our society and attempting to try to operate within that framework. I say "attempting to operate within that framework" because we cannot, as Atheists, get a fair shake in any court of the land, and we know it. Just as a Negro has been traditionally unable to get justice in any southern court, an Atheist has been traditionally barred from any justice in a Christian court. We know this. We have experienced it. We have seen biased and prejudiced courts work against us, even here in Texas, our home base.

The fourth aim of our society is to encourage the development and the public acceptance of a human ethical system stressing the mutual sympathy, mutual understanding and mutual independence of all people, and the corresponding responsibility of each, individually, in relation to society. You are listening to me tonight, and I am here tonight, because you want a better society in which to live and the Society of Separationists believes that you and I can have this and share it with everyone through the use of reason.

Our fifth aim is to develop and propagate a social philosophy in which man is the central figure who alone must be the source of strength and progress through ideals for the well being and happiness of humanity. We mean by that that we don't rely on gods or angels or prayers, but that I expect you to do something to improve our society and I intend to do something to improve society myself. We are the central figures and from us comes the strength, the idealism and the push for progress which will bring the well being and happiness we all desire for all of humanity.

The sixth aim of our society is to promote the study of the arts and sciences and the study of all problems affecting the maintenance and perpetuation and enrichment of human life. We hope some day to establish our own university toward this end, and we hope this will come through the generosity of persons who are interested in these programs for the supremacy of reason.

The seventh aim for the society is to engage in such social, educational, legal and cultural activities as will be useful and beneficial to the members of this Society of Separationists and to society as a whole.

The freethought community has many organizations in it other than ours. We meet annually and we often meet month to month or quarterly. As I go from city to city to speak at universities or on

television, we have so-called inner meetings of our groups at homes, or hotels or public meeting halls.

I have much sympathy for the cry of the Negro people that "Black is beautiful," for as I meet more and more Atheists everywhere I have a strong realization, and flowing from this a sense of conviction, that Atheism is the avant garde of our new and more beautiful society which is in its birth throes right now.

We are confident that if persons rule their lives, and if society is built upon reason, that the primary objective of our founding fathers will be met when we can have the greatest good for the greatest number, and actual liberty and justice for all.

Tonight I want to go back to the first aim of our society which is to promote freedom of thought and to scrutinize religious beliefs, creeds, dogmas, tenets, religious practices and rituals.

I have a list of so-called heresies and human traditions which have been adopted and incorporated into the body of beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church and which are presented as having been derived from the holy Bible and having been a part of the church practice from the beginning of the Christian era. Nothing is further from the truth. Let me give you a few dates. I am going to list just a few tonight, and we can get into the why's and wherefore's at a later time in our discussions.

Of all the human inventions taught and practiced by the Roman Catholic Church which are contrary to the Bible, the most ancient are the prayers for the dead and the sign of the cross. These are mentioned nowhere in the Bible at all, and it is estimated by Bible scholars that they began about the year 310.

Wax candles were introduced in churches ca. 320 A.D. Veneration of angels and dead saints began about 375 A.D. The mass, as a daily celebration, was adopted in 394 A.D. The worship of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the use of the term "mother of god" as applied to her, originated in the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.

Priests began to dress differently from the laity, that is, people like you and I, in the year 500. The doctrine of purgatory was first established by Gregory the Great about the year 593, and every Christian who died before that time did not even know about it and presumably never went there on his way to heaven or hell.

The Latin language as the language of prayer and worship was also imposed by Pope Gregory First in the year *ca.* 600. It is generally understood that Jesus Christ (if he indeed ever existed) spoke in one of the dialects of the Aramaic tongue. The practice of prayers directed to Mary or to other dead saints began in the Roman Cath-

olic Church about the year 600. I can find no Biblical citation directing prayers to be made to her or to any dead saint.

Most Protestants believe that the title of Pope, or universal bishop, was first given to the Bishop of Rome by the wicked emperor of Phocas in the year 610. This he did in spite of Bishop Ciriacus of Constantinople, who had justly excommunicated him for his having caused the assassination of his predecessor, emperor Mauritius. Gregory I, then Bishop of Rome, refused the title, but his successor, Boniface III, assumed the title of Pope.

I certainly cannot find any appointment by Jesus Christ of Peter to head up any such organization as the Roman Catholic Church. What I do find is that Jesus Christ had twelve apostles and he specifically directed them to preach only to Jews, and not to gentiles. His specific directions, in *Matthew* 10:5–6 are, "These twelve, Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, 'Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' " End quote of Jesus and the Bible.

The kissing of the pope's feet began in the year 709. Worship of the cross, of images and relics was authorized in 788. Holy water, mixed with a pinch of salt and blessed by the priest was authorized in the year 850. The veneration of St. Joseph began in the year 890. The baptism of bells was instituted by Pope John XIV in 965. Canonization of dead saints was a first of Pope John XV in 995. Fasting on Fridays and during Lent was imposed in the year 998. The mass was developed gradually as a sacrifice, but attendance was not made obligatory until the eleventh century, at least one thousand years after Christ.

Many Roman Catholic priests now want to get married, and indeed they were able to do so for many years, for the celibacy of the priesthood was decreed by Pope Hildebrand, Boniface VII, in the yeat 1079. The rosary, or prayer beads, was introduced by Peter the Hermit in the year 1090. Confession of sins to the priest at least once a year was instituted by Pope Innocent III in the Lateran Council in the year 1215.

The doctrine of the seven sacraments was affirmed in the year 1439. The immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in the year 1854. We now see the spectacle of the pope today attempting to make women accept motherhood when they want to limit their families by the use of birth control methods, instruments and pills. The pope says that the women must listen to him because his word is the infallible interpretation of the will of god. Pope Pius IX proclaimed this dogma of papal infallibility

only in the year 1870, not even one hundred years ago and almost nineteen hundred years after Jesus Christ is supposed to have died. It is no wonder that the Roman Catholic lay woman is questioning today. She wonders why anyone should attempt to tell her how many children she must have when the cost of rearing children is so great today. She wonders when birth control pills are very readily available and very inexpensive why she cannot use this method to control the size of her family. She questions not only this decision of the pope, but the very idea of his infallibility which is so new in human history.

We will get back to all of these ideas and see why they were made church dogma. The "why" is always the most interesting. But this is all for tonight. I will be back with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state in America, in fact, as well as in theory. For a small gift we will put you on our mailing list for our regular publications and we will furnish anyone with a copy of the aims and purposes of our society upon request. The address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. You may send us inquiries, information or opinions, either to Madalyn Murray O'Hair, or the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We are always pleased to hear from you. Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 23—November 4, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE "STONE THEORY" OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Several months back I was challenged to debate a fundamentalist preacher in New Jersey, on the proposition that god is a purely human invention. I am constantly doing research anyway, and this gave me the opportunity to do a little more. I came upon a most curious idea of the beginning of religion, having to do with stones. This intrigues me, and I think that it will intrigue you tonight.

I became so involved with stones, rocks and what-have-you that it precipitated yet another crisis in our home, with my husband describing the rocks in my head and shouting threats about what he would do if the supper dishes were not soon washed. But, to get to the point at hand.

In order to study any ancient religion or doctrine we must consider the intellectual level of the people of that particular period. Mass illiteracy prevailed over the entire world until only two or three generations ago, and even today it is still prevalent in many nations, even in the United States.

Only just before the turn of this century there was no really clear understanding of the laws of nature. The contemporary discoveries in diverse fields: radio astronomy, physics, psychology, contemporary philosophy and humanology are day by day affairs in relation to the geometrical stockpiling of human knowledge.

There are all kinds of theories about religion, both among real religious scholars (as opposed to illiterate preaching ministers) and in the Atheist community. Some historians say that religion grew out of fear. Some say it was related to a study of astronomy which was quite primitive. Some say it evolved from savage ideas about dreams. Some say it evolved from dead ancestor worship. Some say it evolved from mythology. Herbert Spencer contended every god was once a living being, enlarged in the memory of succeeding generations.

There is no dispute that religion first concerned itself with innumerable and varied things which were regarded as "peculiar" or as having some strange properties. These were animals, vegetation, springs (later rivers), rock formations, and finally, people. There were great leaders, ancestors and people who became mythological. These were all (we think, but we don't know) simple religions, unphilosophical and harmless cults built around naturalistic concepts and served by crude rites, and later by "sacrifices" of fruit, then of food, later of nuts, and finally, of animals.

Each small local group of persons had its own cult, derived from its own experiences of living in a particular climate and in a certain era of life. Gods were friendly. They brought rain, abundant crops, and healthy babies. People were happy. Yet, there was death, and it was unexplained then and it is unexplained now. It seems just incredible that we have to die. But we do. We die now. These people died then. No one knew exactly what to do when someone died, so first the body was attended as long as any hope for recovery remained.

Later it was thought, apparently, that perhaps death was sometimes temporary. Perhaps some people were seen in comas, who looked as if they were dead and yet recovered, so the practice started to preserve the body for a while, and this was the next step.

Finally someone had the idea the "something" left the body when a person died. Maybe this came from the struggle for breath of certain dying people, and it was thought that "breath" left the body, or something mysterious. You really can't see breath. But you can see dreams. And someone would be dead and yet appear to the living persons in dreams, so that, startled, they would waken and perhaps go and look to see if the one person was really dead and still really there, lying there, dead. So then a fear of the dead developed. It could be that someone died of a contagious disease, and those who attended the dying person then also died, and perhaps it was felt that the dead person had the ability to kill others even after he was dead.

Rituals, that is certain acts, began to be introduced to keep the dead persons dead and to keep them from acting adversely to the living ones. Food was brought directly to the graves so that the dead people would stay there and need not go about looking for food and thus harming the live ones. Rocks were put on the graves to hold the dead down in the graves.

Very slowly the rocks were found to be effective, for after a number of months or years, the dreams of the dead came no more

and so the rocks were viewed as magic. But, sometimes even years later, there was that dream again and the person was walking around, and the dreamer woke with a start and rushed out to see if the rocks had been moved. He remembered that once long ago food helped when brought to the graves, so food was brought to the rocks, and oil poured on them to make it too slippery for the dead person to get out.

Then that dreamer thought that perhaps the person in the grave needed blood to keep living there and leave the dreamer alone, for when someone lost a lot of blood didn't he die? So blood of animals was put on the stones, or an animal sacrificed. In extreme cases a stick was driven through the heart of the corpse to keep him in his place, or a fence was put around the grave, a fence too high for him to leap over.

The remnants of these very ancient beliefs are with us today. Most cemeteries are fenced and the little cross above them is a relic of the stake through the heart, and the tombstone is a descendant of the original stones.

Some people were so feared that special pains were taken to bury them. Alaric, a Visigoth king and conqueror of Rome, was buried in an unusual way. A stream was diverted, he was put in the bed, and then the stream was put back into the bed to keep him down. But, as the good, or the frightening, ancestor receded from memory as the years passed, he underwent an airy change. He became less like he was originally or really. He was more insubstantial or immaterial, in that he existed only in memory, but he grew. His brave feats were braver. His temper became wilder in the telling. His wisdom grew as tales multiplied. He became liberated from what he had been. He was emancipated and he became not a human being, nor even a memory of a human being, but he became a legend, a wondrous powerful person, a god.

But everyone had ancestors and there were scores of them, hundreds of them, thousands of them, hundreds of thousands of them, and we call that polytheism.

They were never quite omnipotent. They were, necessarily, mutually limiting. Families cared for their graves. But mankind became more affluent and more knowledgeable, and the responsible members of the community could not waste time feeding these ancestors, or keeping them under stones. A good hunter was needed. A good reaper could not be replaced, and therefore the inferior persons, the crippled in the community, were hired to do this job.

The hunter would say, "You see to it that Dad gets a good bowl

of corn every Wednesday," and the servant then did this. Each Wednesday the hunter would see that the bowl was empty and he assumed that dear old Dad had eaten it. He would not know if the birds got it, or small animals, or if the inferior person hired for the job took it, but in this way a class of priests came into being.

The attendant had nothing to do except accumulate the food and grain put on the grave and to tell little tales about the grave so he could keep his job. At first you know that bodies were left in huts. The huts were simply abandoned and new ones built. The old hut with the old corpse in it became a place of curiosity, and finally a temple. Soon the gods depended largely on their houses to impress others so that the little hut with the corpse in it, a corpse held down by stones, was made into a larger mound, or a barrow, or perhaps a pyramid was built over it.

One chieftain bolstered his ego, his image, with a greater and bigger god than his neighbor's. But in some instances the little tribe of people had to move and they could not take the grave with them. What to do! What to do! Aha! They took a stone, the nicest one they could carry.

But still there was a god for every family, hosts and hosts of local gods, and as wars were won or lost, or families died out, one god was swallowed up by another, or one religion assimilated the elements of another.

In the telling of the tale of bravery of the human ancestor, one god was flattered by a super-added factor: "Why, our god is so powerful that he can control the rain. It always rained for him when he was alive." So he became the local corn god, or the rain god.

Conspicuous consumption was a factor. "I can give more corn to my god because I have more, which proves I am a better man than you are in making corn." The sacrifices became far more and more. This happened all over the world, and with some certain Jews, who had numerous family and localized gods called teraphim gods. Since the Jews were nomads, sacred stones taken from the graves of these domestic ancestor gods became gods.

In the legend of Rachel, she stole her father's teraphim and when the angry chieftain overtook her he asked why she had robbed him of his domestic god. The story is in *Genesis* 31:19–37. Micah (that story is in *Judges* 17:1–13) hired a Levite to care for his teraphim. The teraphim was preserved in each household with reverential care, and consulted on occasions of doubt or difficulty, first by a family member, later by a domestic priest clad in an ephod.

They became enlarged to gods named Molech, or Baalim, or Jah-

weh, and they were in Beth-els, or "abodes of the deity."

The sticks through the heart became trees associated with the stone, as often such sticks took root and grew. In the Bible we find that in the neighborhood of Sichem was an oak, and its stone nearby was an altar of Abraham (or Jacob), or a memorial of Joshua. Near Hebron stood the Oak of Mamre, and under it the sacred stone, an altar of Abraham.

Near Beersheba there was a tamarisk tree with a stone ascribed to Isaac. At the camp in Gilgal were twelve stones and we don't really know what they were: twelve signs of the zodiac, twelve months of the year (lunar months), the twelve tribes of Israel or twelve apostles of Christ. I'll get back to the magic number twelve in a later broadcast.

There was Ebenezer, which translated means the "helping stone," and Tobeleth, which means the "serpent stone," and Bathshemesh, which means the "great stone," and there was the stone at Gibeon. Even Mohammed himself was unable to exclude from Islam the holy black stone of Kaaba at Mecca.

There were all kinds of Baalims or Baals in the Bible. This word means "stone." there was the Baal of Lebanon, of Mt. Hermon, of Mt. Peor, and there was Baal-Tama (or god of the palm tree).

Jahweh was just one of these gods originally, and apparently he was a stone or rock of fertility, for the grave he guarded originally must have been of a man who had had many children. For this reason Jahweh visited Sarah and Leah and Rachel and Manoah's wife to make them fertile, to give them children. He visited Hannah, and in the form of the holy ghost, he actually impregnated Mary. He was a stone carried in a box. Moses said, "He is the rock," and they knew what they meant in those days by a rock. David sang, "Jahweh liveth, and blessed be my rock." David sings again, "exalted be the god of the rock," and "Jahweh is my rock and my fortress," and "Who is a rock save our god?"

Jahweh, the rock that was a god, was carried around in a little box called an ark, and this is related at length in the books of *Judges, Samuel* and *Kings*. As the Jews wandered from place to place he went with them in his little box. Read the story of the battle with the Philistines at Eben-ezer, the fall of Dagon before the rival rock god Jahweh, and then (oh, horrors!) the carrying off of the rock in the ark by the enemy, its recovery, its removal to Jerusalem, its enthronement by Solomon. All these tales corroborate that Jahweh in person dwelt within the stone in the ark, and that Jahweh was a rock on someone's grave originally.

Well, that's all I have time for tonight. But I will pick this up at a later date. It is a fascinating theory, isn't it?

My sponsor, meantime, is Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, a non-profit, non-political educational organization dedicated to complete separation of church and state. Beginning October 1 we went on the air in Texas and Michigan with this same program. If you enjoy these programs, please send a contribution so that we may go into other areas also. We are moving this month to larger headquarters, and when we have our own taping equipment built in there (it is currently in a series of big crates in our present office) we expect to be on four more stations before the end of the year.

Everything helps. You can reach us at Society of Separationists, S.O.S. for short, at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Until then, thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 24—November 11, 1968
KTBC Radio-Austin, Texas

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

In our search for the origins of religion we come often to a hero of Christianity, and I would like to take a long hard look at him tonight.

Christianity came to power in the western world simply because one of its adherents came to power and then suppressed all other religions. That person was Constantine. Constantine was a Roman emperor born in 274 and living until 337. He was originally a worshipper of the god Apollo. Apollo was the god of the sunlight, prophecy and music. But by that time there were some Christians in the Roman court. Constantine liked them as persons, so in the edict of Milan in the year 313, he declared for a policy of religious toleration, that is equality, for all religions.

By the year 323, however, he had become strongly pro-Christian and by the year 326 resolved to found a new capital on the shores of the Bosphorus called Constantinople, after himself.

In 325 he called the Council of Nicaea, reorganized the Christian church along imperial lines and had drawn up an offical creed for that church at that time. Certain books were thrown out of the Bible and called "apocryphal." Some of them came to be rejected for no other reason than that they were literarily inferior, or inferior in so-called religious value. There is Paul's *Letter to the Laodiceans, The Gospel of the Hebrews, The Gospel of Peter, The Gospel of the Infancy, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the Acts of John, the Acts of Thomas.* You see, *you* thought the New Testament was *Matthew, Mark, Luke and John* plus *The Acts* and Paul's letters. This simply is not true. The books tossed out are preserved in part by the Apostolic fathers, Clement, Shepherd of Hermes, the epistle of Barabas and others. But it was a mortal, not a god, and it was a council or congress of persons meeting who decided what was going to go into your Bible as the holy work of god and what was not going to go

into it.

Constantine was flirting with the church, but his people were pagan and he did not convert to Christianity until [he was] on his death bed. He was baptized when he was dying, after having put his son, Crispus, and his wife, Fausta, to death.

Soon after this Pope Sylvester I made a claim that Constantine had given the pope sovereignty over the western portion of the empire. Constantine was dead and no one could dispute this. This document came to be known as the Donation of Constantine. It was generally accepted as authentic and was utilized as the basis for the papal claim to temporal supremacy until 1440 when Lorenzo Valla thoroughly demonstrated its spuriousness. But the Roman Catholic Church got away with this phony deed or "donation" for about one thousand one hundred years.

But that is not so important as is Constantine's son. For we see by reading about him how Christianity first came into power and how it stayed there. The son was Constantius and he made himself sole emperor by usurpation of the power of his two brothers and by half a dozen murders. He called himself "His Eternity" and "Lord of the Universe." He yielded to every demand of the Christians: to love thy brother as thyself, and he did it in the true Christian manner.

He closed all pagan temples and decreed that all who used them, or offered sacrifice, should be put to death and their property confiscated. He decreed the death penalty for the use of idols by the pagans, while Christians worshipped them in their own churches. He decreed that in all ecclesiastic matters his will had the force of canon and he forbade the bishops to condemn any opinion which he held. One bishop he tortured, one he put to death, others he banished. Whole troops of people whom he called heretics were massacred. In many provinces, towns and villages were utterly destroyed. He killed 3,000 persons in Constantinople, and for ten intense years there, persecuted the pagans and other theological doctrines.

Christianity did not come into dominance by the wondrous act of god, or by sweet reason, or the truth of the ideas of the church. It came into dominance by the blood of the sword. As Christianity gained dominance the laws became endless.

Pagan temples were destroyed. Pagan property was confiscated. There were systematic massacres. One ordered by Theodosius in 380 in Thessalonica was unique. The pagans were invited to "games" at the Circus. The entrances were blocked and the soldiers of Theodosius killed 15,000 women and children for the true glory of Christ. People were tortured and punished. Anyone not a Christian could

not leave a will. Widows and children of pagans were made destitute. Temples were razed, plundered, burned. One decree in 391 said, "Let none befoul himself with sacrifices . . . or enter the temples . . . or defend statues made by hand," and if he did, the punishment was death.

Under this statute about 15,000 were murdered. Pagan children were then placed in Christian homes to be reared in the faith, once their parents had been murdered.

Now up until this time, at the opening of the so-called Christian era, there had been schools in every considerable town. There had been advanced academies (we call them colleges) in the great cities, and universities in the centers of civilization. With the advent and rise of Christianity the schools could not be attended, under pain of death, and they died out. There came an end to human inquiry and everywhere there were records of the last great men: Galen, the last great physician, who lived from 130 to about 200; Ptolemy, the last great geographer, who lived from about 100 to 160; Diophantus, the last great mathematician, who lived about 250; Lucian, the last great exponent of Hellenistic scepticism, who lived about 125 to 200. The temple schools of Asklepios were shut. Public lecturing by non-official teachers was prohibited, first in Rome, then in Constantinople.

Under a special edict of Theodosius, Bishop Theophilus, in the year 389, destroyed the Serapaeum in Alexandria, burning and destroying the greatest accumulation of books the world had ever known. The last schools to teach Greek philosophy, the schools of Athens, were closed by Justinian in 529. Persecutions were so intense that within a very short span of time 70,000 persons were forcibly baptized in Asia Minor alone. Given the population of the entire world at that time, this is fantastic.

Finally, Pope Gregory the Great condemned all literature and all intellectual effort. The church preferred prayer to science, religion to geometry and mathematics, and the gospel to any other written word.

From the beginning, what could ever come out of it good? The stench of Christianity has been, since, in the nostrils of all mankind. Its major crimes are an endless procession across the pages of all human history. You all remember them: 1) The affrontery of daring to invade other nations and continents as missionaries, abusing and debasing the native culture, history and religion; 2) The military subjugation of nations, all of South America and Mexico with the destruction of great and extraordinary civilizations; 3) The bloody

religious wars, particularly the Thirty Year War which decimated Germany and resulted in the deaths of half the population of that land; 4) The stupefaction of whole nations–Ireland, Spain, Portugal –extant in this condition today; 5) The Crusades which brought disaster and death and 6) the Inquisition with its *auto de fe*, the tortures, the unhappy trials, the burning at stakes and the millions of lives ruined, destroyed or extinguished by the church.

Who got the lands of the unbelievers, the heretics? Who got their serfs, their manors, their bank accounts, their businesses, their children? Ah! The holy mother church. The Crusades were good business for the church, as was the war endlessly fought, the Inquisition. Three centuries of Crusades resulted in plundered and sacked villages, ruined agriculture, lands laid waste, two million people dead at home, but the property of those who went on those crusades (and never returned) was put under the protection of the church.

And you guessed it–the church never gave it back to any of the families involved. Even the burning of witches in America was inextricably bound up with who got what the witches owned.

This is the road that has led the church today to where it is: intellectually bankrupt, emotionally defunct, but a part of "big business" and the powered establishment.

Christianity has been a reign of terror. It has undermined the ideas of personal freedom and political freedom. It was solely responsible for the halt of civilization for a minimum of over 1,300 years during the Dark Ages. It has been a constant brake on scientific progress, art, music, culture and to the intellectual progress of man.

Christianity obliterated education. It obstructed human inquiry, it stunted the development of the human mind. It paralyzed curiosity and intelligent examination of the natural world. It railed against the concept of human betterment and it substituted the fear of death for the love of life.

For the sense of dignity of man, it substituted the doctrine of personal inadequacy, the sense of guilt, the habits of self-doubt and abnegation. It supplanted courage and initiative with resignation. It directed the sexual impulse into physical and psychological perversions with emphasis on mortification of the flesh and celibacy, the residual features of which are still with our culture today.

I am a woman and I can never forgive the church of Christianity for dogmatically relegating women to an inferior position socially, politically and intellectually. I will be documenting every one of these charges with example after example as I proceed with these

programs.

Meanwhile, my sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state. Tonight we feature a very special booklet. It is entitled *Religious Beliefs of Scientific Americans*. It is the only study ever done on the scientific community in respect to religious tenets. We urge you to order a copy for one dollar. The findings will startle or delight you, depending on whether you are religious or non-religious.

The booklet can be ordered from Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. We are interested in your reactions to this programming, and you can reach us by simply writing to S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will be back with you one week from now, same time, same station, same day of the week. Thank you for listening to me, and a very good night to you.

Program 25—November 18, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

WHAT IS RELIGION?

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I tape these shows. I do a number of them; taping at the radio station just once a month. As I started to do this series of programs for this month, it dawned on me that I was working on Sunday. Do you know the penalty for that? Let me quote it to you. *Exodus* 35:1–2, "And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together and said unto them, 'These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.' " Put to death? Whew! Did you know that was in the Bible? Oh, the Bible could not really mean that! Let's read on. *Numbers* 15:32–36, "A man gathered sticks on the Sabbath day and he was brought to Moses and Aaron, and they were asked what to do with him since he was clearly working on the Sabbath. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.' " And they did it. They killed him. Do you read the Bible?

You get sold this bill of goods about the Bible. Either you believe it or you don't believe it. Either you all go out and kill everyone who is working today or you are directly disobeying an order from god himself, that is, if you believe that this is what god told Moses. Let's look at some other things which are put into god's mouth.

Right now the churches are doing everything they can do in order to hang on to you. Religion changes its form to accommodate new conditons. The Bible is reinterpreted constantly so that it will conform to new knowledge. But now we have liberal theologians. Here is Martin Buber representing the Jews, Paul Tillich and Reinhold Neibuhr representing the Protestants, Jacques Maritain for the common man, Norman Vincent Peale representing the Roman Catholic Church line. All they do, each and every one, is to coat the pill

differently so you can swallow it.

The businessmen's solution was to put Gideon Bibles in motel rooms, but now that the Latter Day Saints own a chain of motels (Marriott Inns), one finds the Book of Mormon there. We have printed forms of grace, grace for all three religions, in Howard Johnson Restaurants, on the dining cars of the New Haven Railroad and on Western Airlines, side by side with your cocktail. We have Bishop Sheen and Billy Graham and Dial-A-Prayers. We have marriage of the American Medical Association with the church and the new interest of the clergy in the dead and dying who often have money they can leave to the church if one gets them in time.

There is "under god" inserted in out Pledge of Allegiance just fourteen years ago, and "In god we trust" put on our postage stamps, currency and bills in the last two decades. Our postal department cancels our postage stamps with the admonition, "Pray for Peace."

Juke boxes blare out, "It's no secret what god can do" as a western, or "I believe" as a popular spiritual. The Negro is stuck with the hymn "We shall overcome." There are monstrous Jehovah's Witness rallies in baseball parks and football stadiums. Easter services in publically owned open air theaters, natural bowls or government-owned properties are encouraged. Xmas crosses are formed by lights burning in office windows of federal office buildings.

We see cinema combining religion with lust and exposed flesh; there is modernistic architecture of churches; cults of religious reassurance from Norman Vincent Peale's *Guide to Confident Living* or Rabbi Joshua Liebman's *Peace of Mind* or Sartre's mystic existentialism, to Pike's *Beyond Anxiety*.

There are hippie priests and night club groups. Government sponsored clean washed kids tour the nation with the religious "Up the People" programs at taxpayers' expense. But no matter what the disguise, we get back to the basics of the tenets of Christian religion and the Bible.

Recently a school of theology came forward which advocated the idea that god was dead. I was shocked to get into this and to find that what this was was really an anti-Semitic thing philosophically, for it killed off the bad old mean and ugly Jewish god of the Old Testament and left the kindly good non-Jewish god of Jesus Christ from the New Testament. Out of this has arisen the newest idea which is that the future belongs to Jesus Christ. This is the so-called school of Theology of Hope. This new Jesus Christ is a blue-eyed blond white American, and don't you think otherwise.

This is why the Atheist says that he would prefer to tell it like it is. The Bible is not like that. Once your feet are on the fly paper, you will learn, Baby, you will learn. When you are caught up in that salvation, it means that you drink the wine and chew the wafer, and put your dollars into the collection plate. You have to know the elements of religion, and then you have to make certain no one foxes you on that.

There are four elements to religion. First and foremost there is the recognition by you, personally, that there is a superior being or entity. This superior being can be in communication with people and is, in fact, in such communication. You reach him to supplicate him or propitiate him through an expert in communication with him—a rabbi, a priest or a minister. They teach you the art of part of that communication which is prayer, and which involves also an acceptance of certain rituals: kneeling in prayer, lighting of candles, fasting, doing penance, comporting or conducting yourself in a certain manner or manners. This higher power can be reached by you, and if you act in proper fashion, following his desires as interpreted by his special agents, this superior power will intervene in your life, or in your death, to reward or punish you in this life or a future life.

Therefore, the four elements of religion are: 1) Recognizing a higher power, person or entity; 2) Supplicating or propitiating that power; 3) Having that power intervene in your behalf in your life; 4) Your continuing existence, after death, is then assured to you on a reward or punishment basis.

You can listen to every liberal theologian you can listen to, and when it is all over he says, "Come to church next Sunday," and there the rituals are: hymns of praise to god, the sacrifice of your time and your money, the prayers, the supplications, the promise of a future life.

Back you are to that Bible. So, it is about time *you* read it. It is about time you stopped permitting others to do your thinking for you. What does the Bible say about these four things? Do you really know? Have you read the Ten Commandments? Do you know that in those ten commandments the god you worship now conceded that there were other gods and that they were all in a power struggle to get to be high banana? So, the first four commandments are ideas about Jahweh's (or maybe you call him Jehovah) fight to get elected. Talk about politics and "Don't vote for the other guy!" Listen to the first four commandments:

I. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* This is simply "Don't vote for anyone else."

II. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them, for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God.* The candidate wants it for himself, not even for his picture or statue.

III. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.* Which is to say that you can't joke about him either. This is serious business.

IV. *The seventh day is the Sabbath day of the Lord, keep it holy.* Well, here we are again, back to my being stoned to death for composing these broadcasts for this month on Sunday.

As a kind of afterthought, god added that one should not kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness or covet, and then he, Jahweh, broke every single one of these commandments over and over and over and over again. I will give you examples of this as I go along, all from the Bible. Let's take several tonight for a starter.

Why do you suppose god objected to a man wearing a garment made of woolen and linen? Why should he care whether a man rounded the corners of his beard? Yet in very explicit language in *Leviticus* 19, the lord, speaking directly to Moses, gave this as an order for all eternity. Why should god prevent a man from coming to the altar merely because he has a flat nose, or was lame, or was blind, or had a broken foot or a broken finger or was a dwarf? Why can't those persons go to church? Yet again in *Leviticus*, this time Chapter 21, those persons are forbidden by god himself to come near his altar.

We are in a war in Viet Nam and we have a draft board which selects men for that war. What would you think if they were chosen by their ability to lap water up out of a bowl like a dog? Is this a bona fide way those men should be qualified? Yet every day our draft boards violate the direct commandments of the lord, for he himself gave this order and stated that persons who can lap water like a dog out of a bowl are the best soldiers. Read *Judges* Chapter 7 if you don't believe it.

I am an Atheist. Some of you are Christians. Some of you are Jews. Now the Jews worship god and they don't recognize Jesus Christ. The Christians worship Jesus Christ. The Moslems worship Allah. These are essentially different gods. Now suppose one of you were to be approached (if you were Christian) to convert to another religion. What should you do? Should you listen to the argument and weigh the benfits of one religion against another, or one god against another? Christians send people all over the world to convert people to their god. What should be done in a case like this? Well, if

you follow the direct words of god, you murder anyone who tempts you. God says, in *Deuteronomy*, Chapter 13, "But thou shalt surely kill him, thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones that he die."

That is a real spirit of ecumenism. That is really brotherly love.

The Congress of the United States has passed a law which gives the Post Office Department permission to cancel out stamps on our mail with the admonition "Pray for Peace." This has to do with the war in Viet Nam. Now, suppose you all prayed for victory in that war and the lord god replied to all of you, to all of us as a nation, and said, "I will give victory if President Johnson will offer as a sacrifice, to be burnt, whoever comes out of the White House to greet him when he comes back there victoriously after having won the war and signed the peace treaty." Suppose one of his daughters came out to greet him, with music and dancing, because she was so happy that the war was ended. Do you think he should burn her on an altar as a sacrifice? Yet Japtheth did this in *Judges*, Chapter 11, and the lord took that burnt offering. Yearly now the Jews lament for four days for this daughter of Japtheth who was burned for a sacrifice.

I would never dream of asking the leader of our nation to make such a deal. As bad as the war is in Viet Nam, no person in his right mind would ask that such a sacrifice be given. This is your Bible. Read it. These are the laws of god by which you are supposed to live. Read your Bible. Read it tonight. There have to be better guides for human beings than this.

That is all for this evening. I will be with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a society dedicated to the separation of church and state in America. Our address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We are a non-profit, educational, non-political organization.

Tonight I would like to feature a booklet, priced at one dollar, titled *Why I Am An Atheist.* I wrote it myself. If you want to know what makes an Atheist tick, you can find out by purchasing the book through S.O.S. (Society of Separationists), S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We also accept gifts of funds for the continuation of our work.

Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 26–November 25, 1968
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

THE 'HARMONY' OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

The good religious folk of America are constantly proving that there is a god. Every time you turn around they have an argument. The favorite they like the best is the concept of the harmony of the universe. I get letters. They all say: Look at the sun and the moon and the stars and you know there is a god because of the order in all of these things. It took a great mind to create this and to put it in such perfect order.

O.K. Let's look at it. Suppose we start with something we know a little bit about. Let's try our solar system and see how it goes. Now, according to the theory of the religious folks, all those planets are out there swinging around in perfect order and following the harmonious rules of god, and are pretty much alike and in "wondrous harmony."

Let's see if they are.

The sun rises in the East and sets in the West, as we see it. The day consists of twenty four hours. The year consist of three hundred sixty five days, five hours, forty eight minutes, forty six seconds. The moon circles the earth, changing its phases, crescent, full, decrescent. The terrestial axis points in the direction of the polar star. After winter comes spring, then summer and fall. It is all very regular and harmonious. But are these invariable laws? Must it be so forever? Was it always so? We can explore this a little later too.

But let us see if the rest of the planets are anywhere in harmony with this. The sun has nine planets. Mercury has no satellites. Venus has no satellites. The earth has a moon. Mars has two small trabants (mere pieces of rock), and one of them completes its month before Mars ends its day. Jupiter has eleven moons and eleven different kinds of months to count. Saturn has nine moons. Uranus has five moons. Neptune has one. Pluto has none.

Well, god didn't do so well in making the moon count even, so

let's turn to something else. We wouldn't want to embarrass the old fellow. The sun rotates in an easterly direction. All planets revolve in their orbits in the same direction (counterclockwise, if seen from the north) around the sun. Most of the moons revolve counterclockwise (in direct motion), but there are a few that revolve in the opposite direction (in retrograde motion). Well, that means there is no perfect order there either. But let's give the old fellow a chance.

No orbit is an exact circle. There is no regularity in the eccentrical shapes of the planetary orbits. Each elliptical curve verges in a different direction. He sure messed that up. So let's try something else. We have to find that harmony and the lord's law. It is not known for certain, but it is assumed that Mercury permanently shows the same face to the sun as our moon does with respect to the earth. Information obtained by different methods of observation of Venus is contradictory. It is not known whether Venus rotates so slowly that its day equals its year, or so rapidly that the night side is never sufficiently cooled. Mars rotates in twenty four hours, thirty seven minutes, 22.6 seconds, and this is comparable to our day. Jupiter, which in volume is thirteen hundred times larger than the earth, completes a rotation in nine hours and fifty minutes. Oh dear! What causes this variability? If Pluto rotates from east to west, it has the sun rising in the West. Uranus has the sun rising and setting neither in the East nor the West. Oh well, let's go on.

The equator of the earth is inclined to the plane of its ecliptic at an angle of 23½ degrees. This causes the change of seasons during the annual revolution around the sun. The axes of other planets point in other directions. It is not a general law on the planets that winter must follow fall and summer, the spring.

The axis of Uranus is placed almost in the plane of its orbit. For about twenty years one of its polar regions is the hottest place on the planet. Then night gradually descends and twenty years later the other pole enters the tropics for an equal length of time. So far god is batting just about zero in respect to harmony of laws governing the planets.

Let's try something else. The moon has no atmosphere. It is not known whether Mercury has an atmosphere. Venus is covered with dense clouds, but not of water vapor. Mars has a transparent atmosphere, but almost without oxygen or water vapor and its composition is unknown. Jupiter and Saturn have gaseous envelopes; it is not known whether they have solid cores. It is not a general law that a planet must have atmosphere or water. This is dreadful. God should be able to do better than this in respect to uniformity of laws

governing planets. Let's explore further and give him every chance.

Mars is 0.15 of the volume of the earth. Jupiter is about 8,750 times as large as Mars, and is the next planet beside it. There is no regularity of, or relation between, the sizes of the planets and their position in the system. O.K. Try something else. On Mars are seen canals and polar caps. On the moon we see craters. The earth has reflecting oceans. Venus has brilliant clouds. Jupiter has belts and a red spot. Saturn has rings. The only thing we can conclude from all of this is that the planetary system is composed of bodies different in size, different in form, different in the velocity of rotation, with differently directed axes of rotation, with different directions of rotation, with differently composed atmospheres, or without atmospheres, with a varying number of moons or without moons, and with satellites revolving in either direction.

This is harmony? These are the uniform laws of god? But that isn't all. I have not gone into the problem of comets in our solar system, so let's look at them too. More than sixty comets are known to belong definitely to the solar system. These are the comets of short periods, that is, less than eighty years. They revolve in stretched ellipses and all but one do not go beyond the line marked by the orbit of Neptune. But besides the comets of short periods, several hundred thousand comets visit the solar system. However, it is not known for certain that they return periodically. They are seen presently at an approximate rate of five hundred in a century and are said to have an average period of tens of thousands of years. About fifty comets move between the sun and the orbit of Jupiter. Their periods are under nine years. Four comets reach the orbit of Saturn. Two comets revolve inside the circle described by Uranus, and nine comets, with an average period of seventy one years, move within the orbit of Neptune. This makes no sense at all. There is no order or planning or creative intelligent mind behind all this.

But there is another problem. What about the earth and how we whiz around there. Did we always do this? I asked that question at the beginning of this program and there is something curious here. In the old Veda texts our year is represented as having 360 days. In all the Brahmanas of India this is recorded. The Hindu year was divided into twelve months of thirty days each. This is affirmed in the Aryabhatiya, and these 360 days formed the basis of early Hindu chronology used in historical computations. Geometric methods and observation were used to confirm this. The ancient Persian year was composed of 360 days, of twelve months of thirty days each. The old Babylonian year was 360 days and astronomical tables confirm

this. The Assyrian year consisted of 360 days in antiquity, based on lunar months and celestial observations. The Bible, if I may use that reference, in *Deuteronomy* 34:8 and 21:13, as well as *Numbers* 20:29, affirms that in ancient times there were 360 days in a year. The Egyptian year was composed of 360 days at one time, affirmed in the Ebers Papyrus, a document of the New Kingdom, and numerous other references. Even the ancient Romans had a 360 day year. On the other side of the world the Mayan year consisted once of 360 days. The Peruvian year was once this long. In China their calendars of ancient date reflect a 360 day year. All these persons were good astronomers, good mathematicians, good observers. In Mexico, for example, the Mexicans knew that the synodical moon period was 29.5209 days, a figure more nearly exact than that introduced by the Gregorian calendar in Europe ninety years after the discovery of America.

Calendars were in confusion on some occasions as the adjustments were made when the days necessary to complete an orbit of the earth around the sun came to be 365 days, five hours, plus. Immanuel Velikovsky has a unique theory of how this occurred. I suggest that you go to a local library and pick up some of his books. He is a very religious man and he attempts to reconcile the heavens with the Bible, but if you read his evidence dispassionately, and don't worry about his basic premise of proving that everything in the Bible is absolutely correct, then you come out with many questions which need to be researched. For even our earth has undergone fantastic catastrophic changes, apparently within the span of man's existence on this globe.

These appear to have been by happenstance. No god interfered to move the orbit of the earth further out from the sun so that the year could then become one of 365 days, five hours, plus. Nature could care less. The earth revolves around a mighty sun, more than one million times the size of the earth, and nearly ninety three million miles distant. This sun is only an average little old star in a local star cloud situation toward the edge of a great spiral nebula (or galaxy) containing all together some one hundred billion stars. The other star galaxies are so far away that we can't make sense out of the figures, and so a new idea for measuring the distance was made. It is, as you know, called "light years." A light year is the distance that light will travel in a year as light speeds through space and light travels 186,300 miles per second. That is about six trillion miles. A trillion is twelve zeros after a number—thousands, millions, then billions, then trillions. If we sent a space ship to the nearest star

outside our solar system and the space ship went a million miles an hour, it would take three thousand years to get there. And this is the harmony of the universe? Never . . . never . . . never.

Your sponsor for this program is Society of Separationists, a non-political educational organization dedicated to the separation of church and state in America. You may reach us by writing to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 27—December 2, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RELIGION AND RETIREMENT HOMES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I recently went out to San Francisco, California, to appear on a television program with Pia Lindstrom, Ingrid Bergman's lovely daughter. While I was there I became acquainted with Lester Kinsolving. He is an Episcopalian minister and he is one of those humanitarians whom one can find anywhere, even in the church! He is concerned with people. He is concerned even with me and what I am doing, for he thinks it is a good job. He has a radio program in that city and he writes a column for the newspaper there. So I visited him on his radio program too, and we talked for almost three hours on the station that evening, on the air, and the radio station let it run because the dialogue between this humanitarian minister and an Atheist was so good.

Since then I have given Lester some material which he has used on his radio program and in his columns in the newspaper, and he has given me some scoops that he is using in his work. At the time I appeared in San Francisco he was seriously concerned with how churches cheat old people with respect to "retirement homes and apartments," with government money financing the entire thing, and he told me that he would write an expose about it and gave me permission to use it as I would.

Here are Lester Kinsolving's own words on the matter, not out of the mouths of babes, but out of the mouth of an Episcopalian minister, and I quote. (This appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper of June 22, 1968, and if you want a copy of it I will be glad to send it to you).

> "Nob Hill, already noted for its abundance of high-rise apartment houses, may eventually see another such edifice—erected on the grounds of Grace Cathedral.
>
> A committee of Cathedral trustees, headed by attorney

Brent Abel, is presently considering plans for a giant retirement home which, though it might dwarf the adjoining cathedral, could provide an important souce of tax-free income.

An impressive example of what has become in a number of denominations a major enterprise in retirement homes is St. Paul's Towers, at the northern end of Lake Merritt in Oakland. This 23-story building, which is the second highest in the East Bay, has 286 apartments, whose tenants pay from $200 to $365 a month in service charges for such amenities as food and medical care.

Two dozen of the 286 apartments are subsidized–for those who cannot afford the "entry fee" which runs from $12,500 to $47,000, depending on the size of the apartment. This "entry fee" does not mean that the apartment is therefore purchased, for upon the death of the tenant the apartment reverts to St. Paul's Towers Inc., which can then seek another entry fee from a new tenant.

St. Paul's Towers is owned by Episcopal Retirement Homes, Inc.–which also owns a similar retirement center in Monterey, called Canterbury Woods. President of Episcopal Retirement Homes is the Rev. Darby Betts, rector of St. Paul's church (which adjoins St. Paul's Towers)–and a trustee of Grace Cathedral.

The Rev. Dr. Betts points out advantages of St. Paul's Towers plan to those who are retired. Instead of a widow or widower living alone or uncared for, his or her private home (on which taxes must be paid) can be sold in order to obtain the entry fee for St. Paul's Towers (tax exempt). He also points out that in case of any interruption or cessation of monthly income, it is against Towers' policy to evict any tenant.

The rarity of such cases, plus the mortality rate of retired people, means that the entire $11 million building cost of St. Paul's Towers should be paid after just three rounds of tenants, according to the Rev. Dr. Betts. 'Then we can vastly reduce the entry fee, or build another building," he predicts.

St. Paul's Towers has been beneficial to the Rev. Dr. Betts as well. He receives a salary of $8400 plus expenses as president of Episcopal Retirement Homes–on top of his substantial salary as rector of St. Paul's Church.

In addition to this, his parish derives a guaranteed annual income of $25,000 from renting the first two floors of its

recently completed parish house as office space for the executives of St. Paul's Towers. This renting of a church parish hall does not disturb the church's tax exemption since the property is listed with the Alameda County Assessor's Office as a "welfare organization."

Even before the construction of St. Paul's Towers, the Rev. Dr. Betts served as a paid consultant to Frush Management Engineers and Retirement Residences, Inc.–which firm now manages both St. Paul's Towers and Canterbury Woods.

In discussing this relationship with Frush, the Rev. Dr. Betts declared that Frush has 'no official connection' with the Utah Construction Company which built St. Paul's Towers as well as Canterbury Woods.

As rector of a parish which is one of the Diocese's most substantial contributors, he was able to persuade the Diocese to sell church property in Monterey for Canterbury Woods–for a $250,000 note, from which the financially hard-pressed Diocese derives no interest.

The Monterey land was sold without competitive bidding, and the two retirement homes have until recently shown their appreciation by purchasing full page ads in the diocesan newspaper *Pacific Churchman.*

The only serious fly in the ointment appears to be the concern of the Alameda County Grand Jury, which in December of 1967 issued a statement noting 'extensive indignation about the unfairness of exemption from property taxation granted to luxury care housing.'

In response to a similar concern expressed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, the State Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation investigated and found that assessed valuation of California retirement homes has climbed from $25 million to $42 million from 1964 to 1966.

The report of the Assembly Committee included the statement that: 'A tax exemption for a retirement spa for the wealthy aged violates all the principles of tax policy . . . Living accommodations including all the latest modern conveniences, heated swimming pools, spacious landscaped grounds and extensive maid service cannot conceivably be classed as charities.'

The Rev. Dr. Betts comments, 'We are providing for people the county would have to take care of anyway. We have 37 retired school teachers and over one half of our people have a monthly income less than $400 per month–although they did

have some equity.'

While the activities of the Rev. Dr. Betts and Epsicopal Retirement Homes Inc. are in accord with standard business practices, they raise anew the question of whether a religious organization has the right to use its tax-exempt status as a means of engaging in business."

The problem is not that alone of San Francisco, for later, in the same problem area, I received an editorial from a newspaper in Mendocino, California. Let me read that to you. This is titled, "The Editor Speaks," and the name of the newspaper is *The Advocate News.* You may have a copy of this too, if you ask for it. It is dated August 21, 1968. Both of these items are free to you. Just send your name and address to us and we will put them in the return mail.

WELFARE FOR WEALTHY?

"Mendocino County Supervisors last Thursday trimmed some $47,000 from the almost $5 million anticipated 1968-69 Mendocino County welfare budget chiefly by cutting back on estimates on the cost of aid for dependent children in the coming fiscal year.

We believe the cut should have been at least $110,000, including the $63,000 that reportedly goes annually to 42 members of Christ's Church of the Golden Rule at the former Ridgewood Ranch south of Willits.

According to a Times-Post Service story by Charles Hillinger of July 24, 42 of the 125 members of the group living at the ranch draw $125 a month from the county welfare department, yet some are living in homes as expensive as $100,000, according to the dispatch.

Mendocino County Welfare Director Roland Kussow was quoted as stating that Ridgwood Park residents give everything they own—all money and property—to the group and then some turn around and apply for public assistance from the county welfare department.

The group reportedly owns and operates a $500,000 motel, restaurant and gift shop, a new garage and service station, a sawmill and cattle operation on the property, six miles south of Willits, for which they allegedly paid $1 million cash six years ago, for the 16,400 acres.

Because no one at the park earns money, there is no social security to pay and no income taxes.

The group has applied for property tax exemption each year but has been refused except for one building used as a

school.

One of the founders of the sect reportedly stated the welfare money 'really doesn't amount to a great deal. Our plan is eventually for the organization to stop accepting payments.'

The welfare checks go to the elders of the community—35 who are 65 and older and seven who are disabled, stated Hillinger. Welfare payments are derived from federal, state and county funds—money that comes from income taxes that those inhabitants do not pay because the group is a church organization.

That's enough for us. We say cut 'em off and cut 'em off now. If the program is legal, and obviously it is, then the laws should be changed. If they really don't need the welfare payments then *why* give them?

We believe as Assistant District Attorney Gerald Sperry who was quoted as saying, 'I don't object to their experiment, but I don't believe taxpayers should help pay for it.'

Giving of one's life earnings, whether it be hundreds, thousands or millions of dollars, to a socialistic church colony, we don't believe should qualify anyone for welfare payments anywhere."

That is the end of the editorial. We understand that this is happening all over the United States with the aged. For years they were forgotten people until the church found out there was money there. Now the churches' concern is bright and eager. We are compiling information on this.

What is not mentioned in these dispatches, but what is prevalent is that the Federal Housing Administration is giving loans of up to ninety per cent of value to the churches to build these homes. Frequently federal grants are given. In the case of FHA, often the money is not repaid, and the loan is written off. This is all your money. When are you going to say that you have had enough?

That is all for this evening. I will be back with you same time, same station, same day next week. You may have a free copy of both of these news articles by writing to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, an organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state—which means a dedication to the church paying its fair share of the taxes we all bear. We are a non-profit, non-political, educational organization. We would like to start this program in Georgia. We are now on the air in Michigan, Ohio and Texas. If you enjoy listening to us here, please

send a contribution so that we may get the Georgia program started too. P. O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, or just American Atheists, Austin Texas. That gets the mail to us too. Meanwhile, thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 28—December 9, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RELIGION AND TAXES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist back to talk with you again.

Sometimes I get *so* excited, intellectually excited! This week I received a letter from the editor of *The New York Times.* It was just to me, personally signed, and . . . oh, dear! that he should write to me! He sent me a copy of something which appeared in the *New York Times* newspaper because he did not want me to miss it. It looks like New York City *next year* will start to tax church property. I'll say that again—it looks like New York City will start next year to tax church property.

If the city of New York can do it, so can this city to which I am speaking. That isn't all. Let me tell you about some other things and then read the article from *The New York Times* to you at the end of this program.

I recently flew up to Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and arrived when a large local controversy was being fought out in the newspapers and on radio and television because the Canadian government wants to tax the church! It's true! So imagine my surprise when I received information from British Columbia, Canada, that the idea is being endorsed there too.

Let me read to you what was written on October 21, 1968 in the *Prince George Citizen* newspaper by a minister of that city, Reverend Fullerton. Prince George is in British Columbia, Canada.

PRIVILEGED?

Two recent Ontario government committees on taxation proposed that churches pay property taxes—although at a lesser rate than do ordinary citizens. These proposals, not surprisingly, have provoked active public debate. What is surprising is that the taxing of churches is receiving substantial editorial support, unthinkable in Ontario a decade ago. Some clergymen even support the move.

Where do we stand on this issue? Twenty months ago we

did a speculative piece on the pros and cons, but on further reflection we have to come down unequivocally on the side of the property taxers. We believe further that income tax exemptions should be removed from church donations by individuals. The effect of both current exemptions is that churches are heavily subsidized by the state.

How much money is involved? The value of exempt church property across the country is difficult to assess, but a sampling of our largest cities suggests that for Canada it might reach nearly $1000 million with taxes foregone of $50 to $100 million annually. Church donations form at least 60% of current charitable donations of about $500 million; applying a conservative 25% average tax rate, this means a loss of 75 million in government tax revenue.

How did the churches acquire their present privileged position? Undeniably they were the pioneers in charity, education and welfare. They contributed to the collective good, and merited special tax treatment because of it, but most of such functions have since been absorbed and paid for directly by the state.

Increasingly, the role of the church has been that of a meeting place or social club, an institution that no doubt provides surcease and comfort to members, but one that is not very different in form from secular societies with the same objects. How much 'good' is generated by the churches today? How much 'charity'? How much 'education'? (And, one is tempted to ask, how much hypocrisy, prejudice and divisiveness?)

Where the churches do provide services that clearly have value for the society, they should be compensated, just as any other welfare agency now draws on the central community chest or similar pooled funds. But to give churches a blanket exemption for all their income, property and investments, cannot be justified; it means collecting taxes from everyone in the community to support those groups which form the congregations of Canadian churches. This might have been less inequitable in the days when most people attended church, but as the proportion of such people declines, the injustice mounts rapidly.

One could go on to discuss the adverse effects on our urban developments of pockets of tax exempt church property, some of them very large. City development is forced to take place on a leap frogging basis, raising the costs to all of

connecting sewers, water lines and roads, and making the city taxes higher than they would otherwise be. Ironically, these social capital expenditures increase the value of the by-passed church property – just as any land speculator benefits from expansion around him. Why should the churches be entitled to these windfall profits created at public expense?

We realize that to many of the faithful a proposal that their beloved church be taxed is close to sacrilege. We can only appeal to them to view the issue with reason rather than emotion. We also realize that most politicians are aware that there are a great many voters who still attend church. However, one day soon many of these politicans will wake up to the discovery that there is a very large and growing group which is fed to the teeth with subsidizing the churchgoers–and our tax laws will then undergo some long overdue changes. The Smith and Select Committee proposals are a first step in the right direction."

Even the Roman Catholic Church in Rome, Italy, is caught up in this. If you read the obituary columns of your newspaper you may have caught a very small item which appeared there. In your city this did not net much publicity, but the story, where it was printed, was exciting. This is from Reuters, the English news service. Our news services in America did not carry the story. On October 30, 1968, Huntley-Brinkley gave fifteen seconds to three sentences concerning the following on their 5:30 P.M. television news program. We present here the long and the short of it.

In the *New York Daily News*, hidden on page 100 among the death notices:

VATICAN BOWS, WILL PAY TAXES

Reynolds Packard

"Vatican City, Rome, Italy–The Vatican announced tonight that it intends to pay taxes to the Italian government on income from its Italian stock holdings.

Until now the Vatican has paid no taxes on income from its stock holdings estimated to be worth $160 million, claiming exemption under a treaty made with the Italian government in 1929.

The Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano* said that the Holy See was prepared to pay the estimated $1.6 million annual tax, but had asked the Italian government for the right to make payments 'on the installment plan.'

The tax is retroactive to 1963 when Italy began taxing

stock dividends. Charities, foundations and other institutions were exempted, but the law failed to mention the Vatican."

In the *Chicago Tribune*, Section 2, Page 9, among the obituaries;

VATICAN READY TO PAY TAX ON ITALIAN STOCK

"Vatican City (Reuters)–The Vatican today announced the end of a five-year battle with the taxmen by saying it was prepared to pay taxes on its dividends from Italian stocks reported to be worth 160 to 206 million dollars.

In a communication with the Italian government, the Vatican said that, "while expressing deep regret for this unpleasant episode," it would not insist in carrying its case further or making further complaints.

The Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano*, in reply to 'frequently offensive' insinuations that the Vatican was tax-dodging, published two letters sent by the Vatican secretariat of state to the Italian government in July and August.

These were in answer to a decision by the Christian Democrat minority government of Premier Giovanni Leone not to call for ratification of an exchange of notes dating to 1963 which exempted the Vatican from the dividend taxes.

After insisting that the Vatican had every legal right to exemption, the Vatican letters said if the Italian government wanted the tax it should say so publicly, and stipulate how much.

The letters said that because the Vatican might find difficulty in raising the sum immediately, it asked if it could pay by installments.

The government estimates that the Vatican holds about 160 million dollars worth of Italian stocks. Private estimates put the figure at about 206 million, but the Vatican always has refused to divulge the exact amount.

The Vatican announcement appeared to end a potentially explosive church-state issue. It also could help smooth the way to the formation of a new center-left coalition government by the Catholic-dominated Christian Democrats and the anti-clerical Socialists.

The issue repeatedly rocked a previous center-left government. In February the Socialists joined the opposition parties to vote against ratification of the exemptions."

And now we can go from the capital of Italy to our own capital, Washington, D.C. The *Washington Star* newspaper this week carried the news that talks are under way between the mayor and the city

council's finance committee to consider taxing the property of religious institutions in Washington, D.C.!

Council Chairman John W. Hechinger told the Metropolitan Board of Trade, "It will be controversial as hell, but I call on you to study it carefully and support it one hundred per cent, not just by nods of the heads, but by speaking up louder than the opposition from the day you first hear about it publicly (later this week) up to all the hearings in Congress, and until its final passage." How do you like that? He was appealing to the businessmen in Washington, D.C. to support the taxation of church land.

Now, let's get to what is happening in New York. City Budget Director Frederick O'R. Hayes and Mayor Lindsay are both now stating that for the first time in the history of New York, taxes will be applied against, hold onto your pew, churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions.

The opener is only on a limited scale, but it is an opening wedge. What are they about to be charged for? They will be assessed for sewer and water use taxes and for the collection of garbage. Yes, the churches in New York City have accepted these services free ever since there was a New York, and at no time ever voluntarily gave a penny toward them. Do you remember the garbage strike several years ago which turned New York into a vast garbage heap? No wonder the churches never talked about the moral or social issues of that situation. They kept quiet because it could have hurt their free services. It's an opening. Let's see where New York goes from here.

But the churches have an idea where to get money, not from themselves of course, but they have an idea where. Let me report on that to you also. This is from the United Press International News Service. An Episcopalian vicar has suggested that prostitution be legalized and that a sales tax be imposed on it! "I suggest we will never stamp out prostitution," said the Reverend Robert W. Cromey of St. Aldan's church in San Francisco, California. "Why not let the profession regulate itself? Put prostitution on the free enterprise system."

We here at the Society of Separationists feel that we have a better idea. Why not put the churches on a free enterprise system and let them pay full taxes wherever they practice? I suppose that somewhere along the line the churches may catch up to the twentieth century. I end tonight's program on that theme, for I have another news item from Rome.

The Roman Catholic Church is now considering a reversal of its condemnation of the astronomer Galileo Galilei found guilty of her-

esy by the Holy Inquisition in 1633. Although Galileo's teachings were specifically declared false in the strongest language possible, the Inquisitors stating that "the first proposition, that the sun is the center and does not revolve around the earth is foolish, absurd, false in theology and heretical, because expressly contrary to Holy Scripture," and that "the second proposition, that the earth is not the center, but revolves around the sun, is absurd, false in philosophy and, from a theological point of view at least, opposed to the true faith," the church recanted in 1820 and accepted the new astronomy. Galileo himself, however, has remained under a cloud for his "sins of arrogance and disobedience." A new trial for the arch-heretic (Galileo) will take place soon, and hints dropped by the Vatican indicate that the stubborn old scientist might finally be forgiven for believing what he saw in his telescope, rather than what he read in the Holy Scripture.

This program is sponsored by the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. It is a non-political, not-profit, educational organization. Our quarterly magazine *Poor Richard's Reports* would cost you only $6.00 per year. Why don't you subscribe?

I will be with you same time, same station, same day of the week, next week. Listen in. Something is always going on in the religious world. Meanwhile, thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 29—December 16, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RELIGION AND MORALITY

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk to you again.

One of the campaigns I have underway is to have people who are Atheists admit this and to announce to the world that they are Atheists, for we have much to offer the American culture. We have a good that should be shared. We are possibly the best of all her citizens. Fred S. Elder argued about this from time to time. Fred was the head of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Oklahoma. Of course he was a Ph.D. A great number of Atheists are Ph.D.'s.

He could not even get a book published by a regular publishing house when he wrote on Atheism. So he had to have his book published by what is called the vanity press, meaning that the authors are so vain that they pay for the publishing of their works themselves. He felt strongly enough about Morals and Religion that he did write a book titled just that: *Morals and Religion*. When he died recently, his good daughter in California saw to it that I got the remaining copies of his book. She gave me permission to use anything of his and when I was still in Maryland I quoted him often in our magazine.

I want to get over to you tonight some of his perceptive ideas about religion and morals. The book is about two hundred pages and you can tell from that that I will be excerpting just a few sentences here and there, being thematic and trying to retain his sense of ideas and his logical structure. This, then, is what Fred S. Elder, the former head of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Oklahoma thought about religion and morals for years, without letting anyone know of it.

"My greatest desire is to help to promote more rational thinking in a highly irrational, deplorably under-educated world; to help depopularize some of the most palpable falsehoods that have

dominated men's thoughts for millenniums, and ultimately to help consolidate the forces of Science and Rationalism against what I conceive to be the world's greatest illusion. Now I am trying to tell the world how much well demonstrated hokum, self-serving propaganda and downright falsification it must eliminate from the religious domain so that man may rightly understand the world of realities as this is known to the world of science and ethics.

A widely prevailing popular opinion holds that morality is an essential element of religion. The main thing that has made religion so widely accepted among the masses has been the ignorance of their parents and themselves of the false bases (of religion), plus their appreciation of the moralities in their manifold forms. But, moralities are of purely human origin. Yet, all these moralities have been impressed upon people in childhood by religious parents as been commandments from gods, and so moralities come naturally to be regarded generally as fundamental to religion.

It is this feeling for supreme values vital to the welfare of the group and the feeling of the dedication to these values which seems to me should be the heart of the idea of religion, or of people everywhere.

I am appalled at the persons who give their time gladly to saving souls from hell, but ignorantly promoting irrationality and falsehood in a world already too full of both; wasting endlessly the world's willing human resources, which, with proper education, at the proper time (including freedom from false tutelage) could have been (or could be) enlisted profitably in any one of many essential social activities.

According to the definition of religion, the ideas of good works, honesty, morality, charity and general good behavior ethically, which so often have attached themselves or have been attached to the idea of religion, form no essential part of that idea. Awful crimes, massacres, human sacrifices have taken place in the name of God and religion and at the direction of her gods and priests in all ages of man and in all religions of man.

I propose that morality is purely naturalistic and humanistic in its concepts and origins and has nothing to do with religion at all. In contrast with science, the way of religion is and always has been the way of authority, and faith in that authority. All scientific knowledge is public knowledge, subject to open demonstration, challenge, check and verification by anyone competent to

investigate.

If there are gods or higher powers, let them step out into the open light of day and convince the world by facing test conditions such as science must face every minute of every day. Let them make themselves felt, seen, heard and be identified for what they may be, *quite independent of human intermediaries of any sort*, and so prove their existence definitely to all the world.

In human history, for a child to survive, his mother had to survive. A large unit, the family, had to survive, the clan had to survive. In the human family, as in the insect, fish, bird and animal world, the social instincts have evolved out of a need for mutual aid, cooperation for the good of the swarm, the pack, the herd, the school, the tribe, the flock, the bevy. But this has nothing to do with morality. Where there is most gregariousness, most cooperation, least friction, there is the most successful living. Feelings of outrage, resentment, disgust, arose naturally and expressed themselves. Taboos or disapproval of actions came first. The feelings of sympathy, patience, understanding, duty, are natural, simple, fundamental, original in man's being man.

A baby acts without moral implications until it learns and begins the development of its intellectual powers. The social instinct is present in everything, always present and enduring. This social instinct becomes the guide, strengthened by habit.

The concepts of morals and morality, the ideas of right and wrong, the sense of duty and obligation are born naturally into the world. They are not handed down from the sky nor from Mount Sinai; they did not originate from religion, they evolved *pari passu* (a Latin idiom meaning with equal step, or at an equal rate or pace) with ourselves and apply equally to all; and the science of ethics rests on this wholly natural base.

I have never known of anyone in any way trying to maintain the idea that religion possesses any earthly individual or group survival value, for it does not. Religion is itself a divisive factor in group life, and has been, historically. I can give just the brief example of the Indian sixty million 'untouchables' who are religiously condemned and held as social outcasts from birth to death.

I think it is never true that a person is good because he is religious, just the reverse. No one was ever born religious. Always that is a matter of indoctrination, though all are born filled with social instincts, born naturally amiable, friendly, kindly, helpful, loving fairness, justice, honesty, truth, and hating brutality and all

the other opposites; in short, born good.

Unfortunately, individuals so endowed are ordinarily less suspicious, more credulous, conceiving the world to be more like their own nature. They easily become religious when so taught, and sincerely so, by simple acceptance of dogma taught by persons they trust (their parents), by emotional exploitation of youth's innocence, ignorance and inexperience, by being uncritical enough to believe that the emotions they experience represent the workings of some higher power (which they are told is named God). Thus it happens that they become mis-educated into an acceptance of the illusions and falsehoods which are religion's stock in trade.

Once they surrender to its dogmas they have small capacity to free themselves from its power. Then they seem willing to rob themselves, and all mankind, of all credit for any native goodness, and give that credit to God.

In reality the only knowledge of goodness the world ever possessed originated in the minds and characters of clear thinking, good mannered, honest-minded, justice loving persons—the noblest members of their species. Never was there any other source from which any knowledge of goodness could originate.

To me it is unquestionable that if no one had ever conceived of the supernatural, of gods, spirits, devils, there would yet have been born millions of these kindly, friendly, sympathetic human beings, naturally indignant at injustices, oppressions, brutalities; naturally preferring truth to lies, decencies to indecencies, sense to nonsense.

My full belief is that everyone desires and seeks to get the greatest value possible into (and out of) his own life. Always, I think, each lives his life the best way his individual, but generally inadequate mind, is able to judge and decide. And why otherwise? Is this not true of you and of your friends? Decent behavior is a matter first of good inheritance, then of good education and training. Life is short, parents generally ignorant at best, education highly inadequate, experience often abrupt, shocking, irremedial; people are continually lied to or indirectly deceived about vitally important things, and so, men judge values poorly, wrongly, often ruinously, and thus make terrible mistakes. The problems are of education, sociology, ethics.

But, in summary, I feel that the truth is that religious faith is utterly unimportant except for its leading of mankind into wild, false, unbased beliefs, hopes, speculations. The only hope for the

advancement of human knowledge and the material and moral progress of men depends rather upon the individual possession of a strong moral sense, including intellectual honesty, and upon faith in the success of intelligent inquiry into things as they appear or are reputed to be, where verification or close, logical reasoning from verifiable knowledge is possible.

But, truth is unsuppressed. Suppressions do not arise out of the suppressors' interests in society's well being but in some personal, family, group or class advantage which results from and is maintained by the suppression. Always suppressions betray fear or greed or lust for place or power or easy money on the suppressor's part. Always some unfair advantage is to be acquired or maintained by the suppressor, always the price paid is continuing ignorance on the part of the mass mind.

This is indeed the intent of suppression by religion's promoters. But they at all times have free rein to promote their falsifications and an especially clear radio and television field when one can, at any moment, hear several religious broadcasts, at any time. Some of these being the most imbecile or outrageous, poured into the air with no chance for sanity or reason to voice a reply.

This situation exists because of the natural reluctance of the better informed to introduce controversy and recriminations into their own lives and by fears of press, radio, cinema, publishers and business or reprisals and boycotts directed by the organized beneficiaries of this promoted superstition and sustained mass ignorance."

And this is indeed what kept Fred Elder, the head of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Oklahoma quiet for so long too.

I think those days are gone forever. Our voices can be heard now, and especially if you will help us with a contribution toward this end. Send it to my sponsor, the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We are a non-profit, non-political, educational organization devoted to the separation of church and state. I will be with you next week, same time, same station, same day of the week. Until then, thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 30—December 23, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE SOLSTICE SEASON

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Someone stole something from me. I don't like it. What was stolen from me and from you was the most beautiful holiday in the world. Robert G. Ingersoll was angry about this theft too. Let me read to you what he had to say about it. He wrote a very famous "Christmas Sermon." It was printed in the *Evening Telegram* newspaper, New York, New York on December 19, 1891. The ministers of the day attacked the newspaper and demanded a boycott of it. The *Telegram* accepted the challenge and set off an issue across the country. The paper printed the Rev. Dr. J.M. Buckley's (is he related to the present famous Buckley?) attack, and Robert Ingersoll's answer. It was a real donnybrook. Let's hear what Ingersoll had to say:

"The good part of Christmas is not always Christian, it is generally Pagan; that is to say, human and natural.

Christianity did not come with tidings of great joy, but with a message of eternal grief. It came with the threat of everlasting torture on its lips. It meant war on earth and perdition hereafter.

It taught some good things, the beauty of love and kindness in man. But as a torch-bearer, as a bringer of joy, it has been a failure. It has given infinite consequences to the acts of finite beings, crushing the soul with a responsibility too great for mortals to bear. It has filled the future with fear and flame, and made God the keeper of an eternal penitentiary, destined to be the home of nearly all the sons of men. Not satisfied with that, it has deprived God of the pardoning power.

And yet it may have done some good by borrowing from the Pagan world the old festival called Christmas.

Long before Christ was born the Sun-God triumphed over the Powers of Darkness. About the time that we call Christmas the days begin perceptibly to lengthen. Our barbarian ancestors were worshippers of the sun, and they celebrated his victory over the

hosts of night. Such a festival was natural and beautiful. The most natural of all religions is the worship of the sun. Christianity adopted this festival. It borrowed from the Pagans the best it has.

I believe in Christmas and in every day that has been set apart for joy. We in America have too much work and not enough play. We are too much like the English.

I think it was Heinrich Heine who said that he thought a blaspheming Frenchman was a more pleasing object to God than a praying Englishman. We take our joys too sadly. I am in favor of all the good free days, the more the better.

Christmas is a good day to forgive and forget, a good day to throw away prejudices and hatreds, a good day to fill your heart and your house, and the hearts and houses of others with sunshine."

Would you believe that such a warm Christmas sermon could cause religious people to start a vicious attack on a newspaper for publishing it? Ingersoll used the word "borrow." He said that Christians borrowed the pagan holiday. I use a stronger word. They stole it. They stole the beautiful holiday of man, and what for?

They claim that this is the birthday of Jesus Christ. Let's look at their scholars, and their history, and see if this is a fact. You most probably all know A.T. Robertson, a late professor of New Testament Greek at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He has written a standard textbook on the so-called Broadus Harmony of the Gospels and it is used in every school of religion across the land. In this book is summarized all the findings of religious scholarship in relationship to Jesus Christ and, among other things, the date of his birth.

After a lengthy exploration of when Jesus Christ may have been born, Dr. Robertson sets the date at, hold on now, the summer or early fall of the year B.C. 6 or B.C. 5. Did you hear that? In the summer or the fall. Recently the idea of the first week of January has gained some following. But no one who is a religious scholar believes December 25th. One must calculate from the possible death of Herod, or the appearance of the so-called star in the East, which could have been a comet recorded by the Chinese or a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, but the Greenwich Observatory says that the conjunction appearing as a single star was very unlikely. Or one can judge the "time of universal peace," that is, no war, of which the heavenly host sang, but there was never any stoppage of war in that time.

One can guess from the so-called ministry of John the Baptist, or

the age of Jesus upon his entry into the ministry, or the building of the Temple of Herod, or the closing of the temple of Janus, or the so-called census of Augustus Caesar. All of these lead the poor theologians in ever-increasing directions away from the idea of Christmas and the year Zero or One of our present calendar.

Actually the idea of December 25th is untenable. All the ancients in Christian history had various days for Christ's birth. Clement of Alexandria, who was closer to that time, said it was May 20th. April 20th and January 6th have always appeared as possible dates. Why did the Christians want the twenty fifth of December? Why that particular date? Why did they steal this very important holiday from the pagans?

There are four points in our calendar which we use and which we call "Solstice" or "Equinox" points, two of each. The latter is easy: we say that the equinox is when the sun crosses the equator of the earth and day and night are everywhere of equal length. The sun does not actually cross the equator, we all know that. But with the earth's natural tip on its natural axis as it whirrs around the sun, this seems to be so. Then, either one part of our old ball of earth gets the most sun, or the other part does. But on these two occasions, the days are equal in length everywhere and this occurs about March 21st and September 23rd.

The Solstice is something different. We don't go around the sun in a circle, we tour around it, on our earth, in an ellipse, which is a flattened circle, an oval. When we are in the points furthest away from the sun, we have another phenomenon. Twice a year, when the sun is at its greatest distance from the celestial equator, about June 21st when the sun reaches its northernmost point on the celestial sphere, or about December 22nd when it reaches its southernmost point, we call these moments the solstice. The solstice in December is the time when the days of the year, in our hemisphere, are the shortest.

Primitive man, and pagan man, were not idiots, you know. They saw this. Always they feared that the days would get shorter and shorter, and finally what if there were only night! What a frightening thing, when the sun was so necessary for life, from common observation. So when the day came for the sun to overcome the darkness, and for the sun to cause the days to be longer, even if just a minute or so longer, it meant that there was not going to be eternal night. The sun had won a fight again. Darkness had had to recede and slowly the days would get longer and longer until spring and summer, with food growing again, would be everywhere.

And so every primitive culture had a festival or a feast on this day. It was celebrated in China, in India, in South America, in Mexico, in Africa, in every single place where man could watch days and nights. There were presents given, exchanged as a symbol, for the sun had brought the most precious gift of all to man: the warmth needed for life and a re-cycle of the year. The ancient men noticed other things too. Certain trees stayed green all year round. Certain growths on trees (our mistletoe, of which we have much in Texas) stayed green all year round, a promise of the abundance of spring and summer to come again. The light of the sun, and the light of stars, and green trees, and mistletoe and gift-giving became very important; that, and revelry. Oh, it was the most joyous of all occasions. There was universal singing and dancing and laughing and well being. It was wild and wonderful and human and warm. It was the best of all festivals. It was the gayest of all feasts. It was the warmest and best of all human activities.

The Christians were no fools. If they permitted the pagan holidays to continue to exist it could challenge the very basis of the Christian religion. First came edicts outlawing the pagan holiday. But nothing so wonderful as this could be outlawed or repressed. Finally some good Christian found the solution. Adopt the holiday. Incorporate it into the Christian religion. Oh, it took some time. It took many many years to effect this. It took much propaganda and it took many penalties and reprisals against those who continued with the old festival. Eventually the Christian community won the day. Then there was a change from the Gregorian calendar to the present day calendar, and with that change Christmas or the Solstice shifted a few days so that December 25th became officially recognized as a Christian day.

There are many of you in the listening audience old enough to remember Armistice Day. That was the day that World War I was ended and it was celebrated for thirty years or more until a second World War broke out. After we veterans came home from that we found out that there was no more Armistice Day. Instead there was Veteran's Day. All the people in the audience tonight who are twenty five years old or younger, never even heard of Armistice Day. They only know Veterans' Day, for that is all they were ever taught. That is how it is with Christmas. Finally no one ever heard of the Solstice, and everyone came to believe that the Christians were celebrating the birthday of Jesus Christ.

But Bible scholars know better and Atheists know better, and we celebrate that old and wonderful and joyous season. We even sell

Solstice cards for this season of Christmas and the New Year, and let me read you what it says on them. With mistletoe, the greetings are for a wonderful Winter Solstice Season for you and the legend says: "December 25th by the Julian calendar, was the winter solstice. This day, originally regarded by the pagans as the day of the nativity of the sun, the shortest day of the year—when the light began its conquering battle against darkness—was celebrated universally in all ages of man. Taken over by the Christians as the birthday of their mythological Christ, this ancient holiday, set by motions of the celestial bodies, survives as a day of rejoicing that good will and love will have a perpetual rebirth in the minds of men—even as the sun has a symbolic rebirth yearly."

This is a natural, Atheist, way of saying, "Greetings of the Winter Solstice Season" to you. You can purchase these cards from us at two dollars a dozen for your next Solstice. Just write to S.O.S., Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We are a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state.

We are now on the air in the states of Washington, Michigan and Texas. And I will be with you next week, same station, same time, same day of the week. Your contributions sustain this program for Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 31—December 30, 1968
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RITUALS EXAMINED

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Since the beginning of man, throughout all of human history, and even in the modern and sophisticated culture of today in America, we find that religion has relied on, and does rely on, rituals. Have you ever given any thought to some of those religious rituals and wondered whence they came? These are actions which people undertake without much thought as to their meaning. There is little if any emotion connected with them. As a matter of fact, the earliest religionists of whom we have any knowledge had got far from the state of emotional expression and seem to have believed that virtue lay in the elaboration of ritual forms. Virtue today seems also to be caught up in some of these ritual forms.

Ritual seems to go far beyond the regulation of those natural feelings and attitudes in which religion is commonly supposed to have had its origin. Ritual consists, for the most part at any rate, not in the regulation, or perhaps over-regulation, of conduct where at least some regulation is necessary (such as criminal law, social etiquette or military drill), but ritual consists of the performance of acts which serve no practical end, and are not even an exaggeration of what once may have served some practical end. By a practical end I mean one which contributes to the health, comfort or happiness of mankind or of some part of it.

Let's look at some religious rituals, both historical and modern, and just speculate on them for a few moments. There are only thirteen types of rituals. The first and most dramatic was human sacrifice. The second was torture and mutilation. The third was ritual celibacy such as nuns and priests practice even today and ritual prostitution which was a part of the pagan religions. Fourth was burnt offerings and the destruction of food and other things in certain ways. Fifth was regarding certain days as holy or unholy, lucky or unlucky, and performing or refraining from certain acts on

those days. You all realize how quickly we have arrived at customs which are today still going on. Sixth was refraining from certain wholesome foods, either all together or on certain days. Seventh was the adoration of images and other inanimate objects. Eighth was the ritual visitation of sacred spots. Ninth was the performance of ceremonies to cast out devils, exorcise ghosts, or thwart witches. Tenth was turning profane into sacred persons by means of baptism or initation. Eleventh was turning living men into gods by means of coronation or ordination. Twelfth was turning dead men into gods by means of funerary rites, and thirteenth was the unending repetition of certain formulae, often in unintelligible language.

Now why do you suppose that intelligent creatures, like all of you, and me too, would ever have engaged in anything like this, or why some of you still do it? Let's see what features we can pull out of these so that we can group them and try to discover what we do and why we do it.

First—none of these rites attains any practical end. Think about it. None of these rites serves any practical end.

Second—none of them has any obvious connection with any of the primitive ideas from which religion came, such as nature worship, primitive animism, the personification of unseen forces, the sense of the numinous, the fear of the unknown, or any of those vague ideas in which religion is commonly supposed to have originated.

The third thing is that these rites make up religion, as we can see it practiced. For the religious person, or the vast majority of them, they are not merely a part of religion, but religion itself. That is to say, religion consists in the due performance of the rites. Religious belief is commonly the belief in the value and efficacy of the rites, and theology consists of giving reasons why the rites should be performed.

Let's look at the rites then. Not only do they not serve a practical end, but it does not seem that any of them can be explained except in terms unfamiliar to modern thought. In all ages that had human sacrifice, which was an important feature of religion for a long while, there is no accepted theory as to the origin of this, or why it was believed to be efficacious. We can see that religious ritual torture and mutilation were probably modifications of human sacrifice.

Ritual prostitution and ritual celibacy are probably alternative methods of reinforcing the procreative powers of the gods, but this does not explain rationally how the process is supposed to work. For example, nuns are the brides of Christ, but I cannot find anywhere

an explanation of why Christ, who is supposed to have been celibate on earth, should have become so vastly polygamous in heaven.

The theory of burnt offering may be that the essence of the meat ascends to the god with the smoke. Food taboos are everywhere. Some are given a spurious practical reason, but none has what seems to be adequate religious reason.

Some lucky days or unlucky days are said to have had a connection with the phases of the moon, but this does not take us very far in explanation either.

We see pilgrims to Mecca, or Lourdes, or Benares, or Rome, or to the big cathedrals in America, and presumably we could suppose that the people think that they are nearer to god or gods than elsewhere, but such suppositions are not consistent with any extant religious theory, and those must go back to the time, or a time, when gods lived, or were believed to live, on earth.

I want to spend some time on the other rituals, so I will do that in another program, and tonight I want to look at the unending repetition of formulae, for this is the most striking, and the most constant, ritual or feature of a ritual. Sometimes prayer consists of this repetition. But we can set prayer apart just now. There are two fairly good religious theories about prayer. One is that it is a means of intimate communion with a deity and the other theory, held by most believers, is that it is a means of causing their desires to be satisfied by making them known to the deity.

I have said before that I cannot pronounce some of these words since I have no pronunciation guide, but I will do the best I can here. What purpose is served by the endless repetition of such formulae as "om mane padme om" or "kyrie eleison" or "Lord, have mercy upon us" or "Allahu akbar"–often in a language that the "worshipper" does not understand? The practice seems to have come down to us from a time when words were thought of as being powerful tools which, like an ax or saw, increased their effect with each repeated stroke. There is simply no logical reason to believe that certain sounds or combinations of words uttered any number of times will produce any results at any level, anywhere. We can see some logic in the "rebel yell" of the Confederate army when it charged the Yankees in the Civil War, for the noise presumably was to strike fear into the Yankee heart. In Karate a sound is emitted at the time a blow is struck, presumably to throw the opponent off guard, or to increase his fear. But there is no real rational reason for me, for instance, in a time of distress to say, "Oh, Robert Ingersoll, deliver me. Oh, Robert Ingersoll, deliver me." No benefit is derived from this at all.

Rites have been modified during the course of human history. The old form has been preserved, but there is a difference. First there was human sacrifice, which then became symbolized, or else animals were substituted for the human. Jesus Christ was a human sacrifice. Celibate priests replaced castrated priests. Fasts became less rigorous. The number of holy or unholy days has been reduced. Fewer activities on those days are tabooed. Why do you suppose business everywhere is fighting the old concept of Sunday as a day on which no one can do business? The old "Blue Laws" are still in effect in many places in America, including Texas. Rituals die hard.

Pilgrimages cease to be a necessity and become merely meritorious. Images become merely incitements to devotion. Divine kings become fewer and their functions are put into commission. Vast treasures are no longer buried with the dead.

There are striking resemblances to all rituals, no matter what the origin, for the rituals of Roman Catholicism, Buddhism and the ancient religions of Mexico, for example, had much in common, although their theologies were different. Similar rites are found among savages who, as a rule, have no theology at all. The explanation of these resemblances popular among Christian theologians of former days was that the Christian rites were instituted by god and the pagan rites by the devil. This view seems to have been abandoned, and it seems now to be held that there are only a limited number of ways in which worship can be performed and that these naturally suggest themselves to the worshippers both of the true gods and of the false gods.

But, if these rites are natural, they should be explicable in terms of human nature and this has never been attempted by any theologian. All over the world we find rites, the object of which is to destroy enemies. Christians hope to do this these days by prayer. Savages hope to do it by means of charms or spells. Yet common sense should tell a voodoo practitioner that to burn a detached lock of hair hurts no one. There is nothing natural in the performance of rites.

They are highly complex and completely stereotyped. They are handed down from a prior generation and the slightest deviation from the traditional form will usually make the performer feel that the rites are ineffectual. The Roman Catholic must make the cross in a certain manner: the up and down stroke is first, and it comes from up to down, and then the second stroke is from left to right. None of the Roman Catholics would dream of making the horizontal stroke first from right to left and then the vertical stroke from down

to up. They would be aghast at the idea and consider this to be sacrilege and mockery.

We find that religion often is a form to be observed, rather than a manner of life. A rite is to go to a certain building each Sunday morning and to publicly go through other rites of singing, kneeling, rising, rote reading, sacrificing (money, at this time in history), making signs, and yet, curiously, no study has been done on the origin, the modification, the meaning of any of these rites, except those studies done by Atheists.

We are currently undertaking to do these studies. We have established in Austin, Texas, a beginning library of freethought and Atheist books, manuscripts, documents, named after Charles E. Stevens, an Atheist of today. It is called the Charles E. Stevens Library of Education and Information. I will be presenting to you many of the theories of the papers and books and booklets in this library as we continue.

There are many reasons that people do not accept religion and I have written a booklet about my reasons. It is available to you for one dollar by writing to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas and asking for the booklet *Why I Am An Atheist*, by Madalyn Murray.

This program is sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state. We continue these programs with contributions from you. You can reach us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767, or simply by writing to Atheists, Austin, Texas. I will be back with you next week, same time, same station, same day of the week. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 32–January 6, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

RELIGIOUS RITUALS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Last week I was discussing rites and rituals. I want to look at them further tonight. There is nothing natural in the performance of rites. Animals to not perform rites and there is no reason to suppose that man, when first he became man, did so either. Animals have courting dances which are stereotyped and the insects have stereotyped communication maneuvers, as the ant and the bee. But like the animals, man probably made the most of his strength and agility to compete with hostile forces and beyond that, merely took things as they came.

So, why rituals? I asked that last week. Now let's go into it a little more. If we analyze a rite we find that it can can be divided into different parts. There is always preparation of a site, preparation of the materials, preparation of the officiant, and then the rite itself, which consists of words and actions:

Haven't you thought of this? The rite is usually performed at some special place. Nowadays that is a church. Formerly it was a building also, or a grave, a tree, a well, a hill. In any case, it must be prepared by being swept, washed, sprinkled with blood, having hands waved or spells recited over it. Then it has to be fenced off by actually having a fence built around it, or by people going to procession around it, or it may be fenced by means of a form of words. This type of fencing is extant yet, for at the Tynwald ceremony on the Isle of Man, the Coronoer of Glenfaba thrice calls to the audience to witness the court is fenced before the proceedings can begin. There are constant consecrations, lustrations, fumigations.

The sacrificial food and drinks are prepared. The sacred vessels, utensils and so on are brought out. Special cloths are there and often musical instruments, and, of course, sacrificial victims. I don't mean in America the kind of victims you are thinking about from the history you have read or the cinema you have seen. Here it is

changed: all those nice little boys and girls in their white suits for communion. Or you, in your best dress or cleanest suit, there with your mind eager for submission.

Now to the officiant. The first rule is that no one may perform a rite unless he is entitled to do so. He can get his title by heredity, by adoption, by some form of initiation, by special training, or he may demonstrate his fitness by going into a trance or giving other evidence of inspiration.

In most religions, rites can be performed only by priests and the priesthood is usually hereditary. This does not involve being the actual son of a predecessor, for all priests are called brothers while in their orders, or fathers when out of them. The apostolic succession is the form of adoption most familiar to us, but Buddhism has similar rites. Islam has no priesthood, but descendants of the prophet are regarded as holy and lead in prayer. In Hinduism all priesthood is hereditary.

It is not enought just to be qualified. The officiant must prepare himself also by the observance of food tabooes and sex tabooes. The taboo on sex is one which many Roman Catholic priests in America are questioning as they move to marriage. Depending on what country, what time in history, the officiant is smeared with blood, or oil, or pigments, or he must wear a special garment and carry an insignia. Why must these rites be so stereotyped, so completely senseless, so counter to rationality?

Then the officiant is required to do something, or make something, and he never makes something out of nothing. The African rainmaker does not make rain by calling it down from heaven, but rather he pours water (or beer) on sacred stones. He has some rain or some water already. The Australian magician makes kangaroos by operating on blocks of stone which represent the kangaroos. We find some clues in fairy tales too, which are echoes of ancient ritual. Cinderella's fairy godmother makes a coach and horses, not out of nothing, but out of a pumpkin and some rats.

We find this idea again and again in our Holy Bible. God makes man from the dust of the earth. He makes manna from the dew. Moses makes a serpent from a wand. Elisha can create an unfailing supply of oil if given some oil with which to start. Even in the New Testament, Jesus Christ makes wine out of water and a meal for a multitude out of seven loaves and two fishes. Always the miracle worker creates not by the mere exercise of his will, but by ritual action upon ritual objects.

Well, an English lord developed some theories about these rituals,

and I have drawn on his ideas during these two discussions. He was Lord Raglan, educated at Eton and Sandhurst, and was in the Grenadier Guards in Egypt, the Sudan, and finally was made District Commissioner in the Mongalla Province. He was president of the Anthropological Section of the British Association for years and did much speculation on religious origins. He first put forth the idea of the diffusion of religious ideas. Simply stated this is that religion is not a natural growth, but a social institution such as war, slavery or representative government. It could arise only in a well organized community and it arose in one center and spread over the world through war, trade, what have you. He thought rituals were adopted and retained by some people, or not adopted, or adopted and then lost, or were modified, or were changed for local consumption. He argued that no society remained static and that savage societies were transformed by such events as the introduction of wheat into Europe, cattle into Africa, horses into North America.

He felt that all extant rituals were derived from a single ritual system and that this system was based on certain definite theories. This theology seems to have taken the form of belief that everything goes in cycles. Every cycle must begin with a miracle of creation; this miracle can be performed only by a god; this god must be a descendant of the god who initiated the series of cycles, and that the latter laid down, in perpetuity, the form which the miracles must take. This primary form is the ritual and that first ritual consisted in preparing a sacred site, a site *outside the world*, from which the world, or some part of it, was created. All rituals are now, he believed, reenactments of creation: firstly in finding and preparing a site, secondly in providing the necessary materials for the recreation of the world or its parts, and thirdly, in converting a man into a god in order that he may be able to perform the necessary miracles of creation or recreation.

While the officiant does this he is identified with the god who is supposed to have performed the original rite, and everything he uses in connection with the rite is holy. It is holy in origin since it is identified with what was used in the original rite, and holy in renewal since the officiant renews its holiness as he renews everything else.

Let's look at the Mass. This is a theory, yet nowhere is its meaning very clearly expressed, although many words are written about it. The idea is that once upon a time a god renewed the life of his worshippers by creating a replica of his body and blood, and giving it to them to eat and drink, and that periodical repetitions of the rite are necessary to renew the life of contemporary worshippers. The

priest, by uttering the words of divine power and by assuming the character of the god, performs the miracle of transforming the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. It should be added that, to make the rite complete, the altar should contain, as in many of the larger churches, the bones of saints—that is, the miracle workers of the past.

It should be clear that these rites are not mere appendages to religion, but are the core and essence of every religious system, and that the officiants, whatever we may call them, are the persons by whom and through whom the religions are kept going.

Lord Raglan had the theory that all these rituals and rites spring from one primary historical idea. That is, that they were all creation rites, and in essence that they still are. What each rite gives to the individual is life, a life which he derives from the rites, symbolically now.

What are creation rites? They are rites, the object of which is to infuse new life and vigor into the world or some part of it, which is supposed to be running down. The rites are to give the world, or the inidividual, periodic new starts. Looking at the Bible one sees that there was a pattern to the first "creation," even as recited there. The formula is a partial work of creation followed by an official naming and an expression of satisfaction with the result. One of the most powerful creation rites still with us is the ritual of baptism.

Why is it so important that all the feasts and sacrifices and rituals should have a fixed date, and that they should be held so exactly on that date? Why was there even bloodshed about the proper date of Easter? Why should god be supposed to mind whether Easter is celebrated a week or two sooner or later? Was it that a ritual on earth had to correspond with a ritual on high? Was it possible that man finally came to believe that what he did on earth, in imitation of something in the skies, could retroactively influence that first event? In ancient Egypt there was an annual ritual combat between the king, as representative of the powers of light and life, and an antagonist who represented the powers of darkness and death. It came to be believed there that the king was the incarnation of an invisible god and that this god resided in the sky. It came to be supposed that he was manifested in the sun and other heavenly bodies and these bodies were believed to carry on the mythical and ritual activities of the king.

Perhaps, with man cooperating exactly at the propitious moment, religion was able to guarantee a continuation of life and the world. Actually the belief in the value of man's assistance to the gods in

struggle with forces of darkness, or death, or evil, or demons, is still very widespread. This then is a patching together of bits and pieces and an attempt to get a theory that will explain rituals. There are other theories of the meaning of rituals, and we can go into them at a later date. But the important thing to understand is that religion has never been seriously and objectively studied by the religious community. The essence of religion is a belief in a mystique, without any rational survey of the reason, purpose, goal or history of it.

Religion is in trouble for this reason. Today people are looking for the meaning of life, for what they call "their identity," and these old patent rituals which are residuals of something about which no one knows anything, something about which we can only speculate, can lead only to an abandonment of the entire idea. I would like to see this done *with reason*, not out of emotional disgust, for we can head into another dangerous kind of acceptance without thinking of many other dangerous ideas which can be very disastrous to man.

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Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 33–January 13, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

ATHEISTS AND DEATH

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

We constantly hear from our religious friends to the effect that death will come to us by a variety of means. Cheerfully they wish on us that we die from leprosy. I don't know why that is a favorite at all. We receive constant little religious tracts showing how Atheists have died. We have received letters from people about their having watched Atheists die and what we do and what we say at that time. Now, all people die. I would not care to see a single Christian die of leprosy. I would not care to see a single Christian die in any agony, whether that was physical, emotional, psychological or mental. Death is a very final thing and I think that it is quite sad.

I had had not too much direct connection with death until my father died. It really threw me. I could not believe that he was actually dead, I think. He had a heart attack following a foray against our home in Baltimore, Maryland. A foray was made by the religious Christian community against us because there was an Atheist in our family. I would trot out to that cemetery every day and just stand there and look down at the spot where he was buried and I asked myself over and over and over again, "What was the purpose for his being alive?"

One of the most tragic things about death is that the brain dies too. After it takes years to learn language, and to read, and to formulate ideas, all of that is gone and every new person has to start all over again. It seemed to me inexpicably tragic that something like this could happen at all to anyone.

Dad was a Presbyterian and he was religious all of his life until he died. He did not care much for the trappings of the church, but he believed in god. I knew he would not like a lot of fol derol at his funeral, but that he would like to have a decent religious burial. I got a Presbyterian minister in there and that minister saw that I was having a hard time with the idea of death when it was so closely

personal, so he seized upon the occasion to attempt to maneuver me into some conversation with him, the obvious intent of which was to convert me.

It filled me with disgust that he should have been so callous as to use such an occasion for the furtherance of his particular madness. I asked him just to read "Thanatopsis" for Dad and to make a short statement of religious faith. People have been as upset about death from the beginning of time as I was, and as I am, for it seems to be such a waste, such a tragedy, such a contradiction.

I would like to tell you about Robert Ingersoll again, and how he once handled a situation such as this. Ebon C. Ingersoll, the brother of Colonel Robert Ingersoll, died in 1879. That is almost a hundred years ago. The funeral was held at his home, as was the custom in those days. The ceremonies were extremely simply, consisting merely of viewing the remains (isn't that a curious word?) by relatives and friends, and a funeral oration was given by Colonel Bob.

A large number of distinguished gentlemen were present. Soon after Ingersoll began to read his characterization of the dead, his eyes filled with tears. He tried to hide them behind his eyeglasses, but he could not do it. Finally he bowed his head upon the dead man's coffin in uncontrollable grief. It was after some delay and the greatest efforts at self-mastery that Colonel Ingersoll was able to finish reading his address, which was as follows:

> "My friends: I am going to do that which the dead often promised he would do for me. The loved and loving brother, husband, father, friend, died where manhood's morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling towards the West. He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point, but being weary for a moment he laid down by the wayside, and, using his burden for a pillow, fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world, he passed to silence and pathetic dust. Yet, after all, it may be the best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock, and in an instant hear the billows roar a sunken ship. For, whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jeweled with a joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy, as sad, and deep, and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death. This brave and tender man in every storm of life was oak and

rock, but in sunshine he was vine and flower. He was the friend of all heroic souls. He climbed the heights and left all superstitions far below, while on his forehead fell the golden dawning of a grander day. He loved the beautiful, and was with color, form and music touched to tears. He sided with the weak, and with a willing hand gave alms, with loyal heart and with the purest hand he faithfully discharged all public trusts. He was a worshipper of liberty and a friend of the oppressed. A thousand times I have heard him quote the words: 'For justice all place and all season summer.' He believed that happiness was the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only worship, humanity the only religion, and love, the only priest.

He added to the sum of human joy, and were everyone for whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave, he would sleep tonight beneath a wilderness of flowers. Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with this latest breath, 'I am better now." Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas and tears and fears that these dear words are true of all the countless dead. And now, to you who have been chosen from among the many men he loved to do the last sad office for the dead, we give his sacred dust. Speech cannot contain our love. There was, there is, no gentler, stronger, manlier man."

Atheists are careful of life. They want to live with human dignity and with beauty. They do not wish to participate in anything which is wasteful to human life, or to any kind of life. They share with a very religious man, Albert Schweitzer, his concept of the "reverence of life." In his own words he says, "Affirmation of life is the spiritual act by which man ceases to live unreflectively and begins to devote himself to his life with reverence in order to raise it to its true value. To affirm life is to deepen, to make more inward, and to exalt the will-to-live." He elaborates also on this theme when he points out, "The fundamental idea of good is this: that it consists in preserving life, in favoring it, in wanting to bring it to its highest value, and evil consists in destroying life , doing it injury, hindering its development." (from *Out of My Life and Thought*).

We Atheists are stuck on this: living reflectively and affirming

life. These are the two themes which run through everything that we do. We are also forever in books, and in ideas. We see that philosophy, the love of wisdom, may be said to have appeared in the sixth century B.C. in that part of the world from which we derive our cultural heritage. The name 'philosopher' was first given to a group of Phoenician or Greek-Phoenician merchants in the cities of the coast of Asia Minor, who began to seek light upon the nature of the world about them by closely observing nature and by speculating or making guesses about it.

We are afflicted with this desire to search, we Atheists, almost as with a disease. If philosophy dies anywhere and everywhere, it will never be dead with us. We always are asking, "What is the meaning and purpose of life?" We ask constantly, "What is the meaning of me?' How should I act and what should I do with the short time of life I have?" All we know is living. We know nothing of death and believe that death is unending nothingness.

In every country a great many dubious propositions are taught to the young with great emphasis. The young grow up accepting these extremely dubious or doubtful propositions. We Atheists feel that one should not believe a proposition or cause others to believe it unless there is at least some *reason* for supposing it to be true.

Thus it is with the subject I am discussing tonight. We know nothing of death. We know nothing of any possble "after life." We know nothing of heaven. We know nothing of hell. We know nothing of perdition. We know only the speculations of persons who invented these places and who elaborate on them out of ignorance and fear. We believe that you have today to live graciously, beautifully, fully, richly. Every moment is one moment gone. Every involvement in something unlovely or ugly or anti-human is wasted, when we have such a beautiful bittersweet small allotment of total time to live.

Make your life decent, something good. It is the only life you have.

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I will be back with you same time, same station, same day of the week, next week. Won't you help us continue these broadcasts? Just

a dollar to S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, will do it. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 34—January 20, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

HELL

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Several weeks back I was invited to speak at a church, to a church group, and a part of the introductory material included a recitation of the Apostle's Creed. I quit going to church about thirty two or thirty three years ago. After that I went only to hear some of the music I love during Easter and Christmas, which music is sung so well by so many church choirs. When the Apostle's Creed was said in unity, I was absolutely startled to realize that although I had not even bothered to think about it for over thirty years, I still knew it. I could have led that group in the recitation of it. This is why the church says, "Give me a child until he is six, and I have him." That which is indoctrinated into a child is never really un-indoctrinated out of him.

Do you know your Apostle's Creed? One line in that struck me with some intensity as I listened, for although I had said the Apostle's Creed many times, in a way I had just accepted what was said, but never really heard it. The Apostle's Creed, for that three quarters of the audience who never go to church, is this, and you will recall it even as I did:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.
He descended into Hell.

Let me stop there and repeat that: . . . He descended into Hell . . .

The third day he rose from the dead;
He ascended into Heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God,
the Father Almighty."

During the time of future broadcasts, I am going to examine the other aspects of the Apostle's Creed, so familiar to all of you, but

tonight I want to look at Hell.

Now many of the good Christian regular listeners to my program write to me often to "go to Hell," but I prefer to examine the idea of it this way instead. This doctrine of Christ Jesus' descent into Hell is emphatically part of the Christian belief, although not alluded to by Christian divines in such a way as to call attention to it. It is taught in the Apostle's Creed. It was also taught by the fathers of the church. St. Chrysostom, born 347 A.D., asks: "Who but an infidel would deny that Christ was in Hell?" St. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished at the beginning of the third century [A.D.], is equally clear and emphatic as to Jesus' descent into Hell. He says, "The Lord preached the gospel to those in Hades, as well as to all in earth, in order that all might believe and be saved, wherever they were. If, then, the Lord descended into Hades for no other end but to preach the gospel, as He did descend, it was either to preach the gospel to all, or to the Hebrews only. If according to all, then all who believe shall be saved, although they be of the Gentiles, on making their profession there."

The belief was current in the second century that Christ emptied Hades of all good souls. Hippolytus (third century) says that Christ preached to the saints in the underworld and conquered "death" with death. Origen, writing in the latter part of the second century and first part of the third century, had no doubts at all about Jesus' descent into Hell. In the apocryphal New Testament, the book of Nicodemus, Jesus' triumphant entry into Hell is described in colorful language. This is some of it. "And, now, thou filthy and stinking prince of hell, open the gates that the King of Glory may enter in; for he is Lord of heaven and earth." Then Jesus Christ came in and "broke asunder the fetters which before could not be broken; and with his invincible power visited those who sate in the deep darkness by iniquity, and the shadow of death in sin."

There is no doubt at all that Jesus Christ, according to the New Testament and his own words allegedly recorded there, believed in Hell. He spoke about it all the time. Let me read some of the material to you. I should digress a moment to talk to you about some of the mail I receive, because always someone sends me a little memo on a card saying, "The Fool hath said in his heart that there is no God," and then they call me a fool. Well, in this first reference, Jesus Christ, in *Matthew* 5:22 says that anyone who calls another a fool shall be "in danger of Hell fire." What did he mean by Hell and Hell fire? In *Matthew* 13:42 he explains. It is a "furnace of fire, in which there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," and this is

repeated in verse 50, same chapter of *Matthew*. The angels do this casting into Hell, in both references.

In *Mark* 9:43–48, Hell is described as "an unquenchable fire . . . where the worm dieth not." I don't know what this means about a worm not dying and I cannot find too much theological discussion on it. In *Luke* 12:5 it indicates that some people here on earth can kill the body (as war or capital punishment; usually the state killing someone) and Jesus Christ says that we should not beware of that, but we should beware instead of the one which "after he hath killed hath power to cast into Hell: Yea, I say unto you: Fear him."

Don't you remember the story of the rich man who would not give crumbs to a beggar? When he died he looked up into heaven, out of Hell, and saw the beggar in heaven. He cried out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." That is recounted in *Luke*, Chapter 16, as a tale told by Jesus, in Jesus' own words.

The greatest writer for Christianity, St. Augustine, often called "the greatest of Christians," wrote that "Hell, that lake of fire and brimstone shall be real, and the fire corporeal, burning both men and devils, the one in flesh, the other in air . . Christ has spoken of it." St. Augustine was right. Christ spoke of it a lot. Let me give just a few more quotes: *Matthew* 13:49, "The angels . . . shall sever the wicked from among the just and cast them into the furnace of fire." *Matthew* 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire." This is repeated in *Revelations* 14:10 where it is said that persons shall "be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever."

The idea of Hell enjoyed tremendous popularity among the clergy for about fifteen hundred years. The people generally did not enjoy the idea much. It was officially abandoned in the early nineteen hundreds when, by an act of Parliament in England, the Privy Council voted Hell out of existence. Since that time it has been on the decline.

Prior to that the chief delight of heaven was the possibility of those who reached that portion of the nebulous future looking out some fine vast window into Hell and seeing the wicked perish there. It was put nicely by Christian ministers, but the best I have seen was by Reverend Nathaniel Emmons who lived from 1745 to 1840 and stated what the Christian world then believed: "The Happiness of the elect will consist in part in witnessing the torments of the damned in Hell, among whom may be their own children, parents,

husbands, wives and friends . . . but instead of taking the part of their miserable being, they will say, 'Amen'."

The foundation of the Christian religion is the doctrine of Hell, whether you like it or not. According to Christianity, Adam and Eve committed a sin and because of this all of humanity from that time forward was consigned to everlasting hell and damnation upon their deaths. Now, the only way that the process could be avoided was for people generally to accept Christianity, which was the way back to god, by accepting the teachings of his son, and by accepting them, avoiding hellfire and brimstone.

When you strip away all the other garbage of this religion, this is the core, the foot and the essence of it. "Except through me thou cannot be saved," and this is Jesus Christ speaking and reaffirming the original idea.

The sin of Adam and Eve is upon you, and upon me, and upon every human being, and if we accept "salvation" *after death*, we won't go through Hell. Do you know what Abraham Lincoln said about this? Shortly after the loss, by death, of his son Willie, he wrote a letter to Judge J.A. Wakefield, an old friend, and in this letter he said, "My earlier views of the unsoundness of the Christian scheme of salvation and the human origin of the scriptures have become clearer and stronger with advancing years, and I see no reason for thinking I shall ever change them." This is the Christian scheme of salvation. We either accept what the Christians have to say is true or we suffer unending torment after death. Everything, as a matter of fact, with the Christians is after death. You go to heaven after death, or you go to Hell.

I spoke about death last week. It is the end. I am not worried at all about what happens when I die. I must make the most out of life here and now. I am not preparing myself for death. It will come naturally to me as to everyone.

The unsoundness of the Christian scheme is apparent upon its face. In order to sell the product, they should really promise something here and now, and not try to frighten anyone into an acceptance of a group of ideas by the threat of eternal fire, brimstone and agony. The product should be sold on merit. If Jesus Christ was wrong about there being a Hell, and if it could be voted out of existence by the Privy Council of the Parliament of England, why don't you class it with other fables of barbarian times and go about your life living humanly?

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Program 35–January 27, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

ATHEIST JOKES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Last week I was talking about Jesus Christ, and perhaps we should take one radio discussion to ask, "Who was he?" Actually no one knows much about Jesus Christ. The biggest question is whether he was a figment of someone's imagination, or if he was a real person. This has been debated as long as there has been allowable criticism of the Bible. Please notice what I had to say there: "allowable criticism of the Bible." For the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity, if anyone questioned anything he was killed, or tortured and then killed, or imprisoned and then killed, and the lucky thing is that anyone who ever had an idea in his head ever survived.

The best citicism of the Bible was in Germany and a school of "higher" criticism was in full flower there at the end of the last century. The unique thing about America is that we are unaware of anything that has gone on in this field. To put it in a humorous way, Atheism never had a prayer. The scholarly criticism of the Bible has never been accepted in America, and has never flourished here. Britain, France, Germany, the so-called western nations, have questioned a great number of things about the Bible and about Jesus, but America is sort of the "Texas of the world," believing in its ignorance that things are as they are represented to be, especially the Bible and that old folklore hero, Jesus Christ.

I was nearly set upon physically once in Maryland when I designated him as "J.C." in a discussion I was having at the University of Maryland. There are no permissible jokes about Christianity in America. The idea is taken very seriously. I was going to talk about Jesus Christ tonight, but let's save that until next week, and instead I will tell you some jokes. They have been accumulated by us over a long period of time and they are pretty sad, but it is the best we can do in this very serious religious world.

The one that infuriates the Christians is the one I tell to college

audiences all over the United States in the hope of corrupting them. I generally find out what the dominant religion is in the student body and then I tailor this joke to insult the greatest number of persons. For instance, if I am in a Roman Catholic area, I make the characters Roman Catholic and if I am in a Mormon area, I make the characters Mormon, and so on. Down here in Texas I'll make this into a Baptist joke.

It seems that the old minister had a fairly affluent parish and he needed an assistant, so he wrote off to the Baptist seminary and asked for a new graduate to be assigned to him, and he got one. He was old and tired, and one night in the middle of the night he heard this car zooming around his parish house. He peered out the window and sure enough, there was a red Ferrari automobile squealing up and down the street seeking his house number. When the car pulled up, a man with a reverse collar and red hair, whistling in a way the lord would not like, came into the house at 3:00 a.m. to tell the old minister "he had made the scene."

The old man chalked this off to the exuberance of youth, but told the boy where to go–heh, heh. There were quarters awaiting him there in the parish compound. Later in the morning the poor old minister was startled out of his bed with hammering and then the blast of a full stereophonic set which the boy had spend several hours installing when the sun had not even risen yet. He crossed himself and went back to bed, and then decided that all that energy should be put to work, so he told the young man to preach that Sunday, the following day, and that he would be in the back row measuring him as he spoke.

Sunday came and the young man took over the pulpit and the poor old man sat in the back seat in the back row, and nearly had a stroke as he listened. He was almost apoplectic, but he knew he could not embarrass the boy by getting up when he was talking, so he sat through it and when the people in bewilderment filed out of the church with its "happening," the old man crawled up the aisle to the young man and he said, "Young man, I can stand your Ferrari because I remember the hot blood of youth. I can even tolerate jazz at three in the morning, for everyone apparently these days has to have 'his thing," but when you speak of the blessed trinity as J.C., Big Daddy and the Spook, out you go."

I tell this joke, because once the kids hear it, the idea of the holy trinity is forever corrupted to them, and they fall out of their seats over this. But usually Atheist jokes are not too good because they are not tolerated. Here are some of the best we have been able to

come up with.

An evangelist was exhorting his hearers to flee the wrath to come. "I warn you," he thundered, "that there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." At this point an old lady in the gallery stood up. "Sir," she shouted, "I have no teeth." "Madam," roared the evangelist, "teeth will be provided." *That* is one idea of heaven.

The worthy shepherd of the Mission Methodist Church, in a burst of passionate eloquence in denunciation of the world's wickedness, declared, "Hell is full of cocktails, mini skirts, bikinis," and just then he was interrupted with a voice from the back of the church, "Oh death, where is thy sting?"

Another one. A Texas oil man recently had a quarrel with his minister and hired one hundred people to go to church the next Sunday with orders to fall asleep during the first five minutes of preaching. Or, Colonel Gabe Bouch controlled his regiment with the iron hand of a dictator, and one day Billy Graham visited his camp in South Viet Nam. "I am a humble servant of the lord, endeavoring to save the souls of the unfortunate. I have just left the camp of the U.S. Marines where I was instrumental in leading eighteen men into the paths of righteousness." "Adjutant," thundered the old colonel after a moment's pause, "Detail twenty five men for baptism. No damned Marines are going to beat my men for piety."

In another vein, some time ago there was a big dinner in New York at which a well known television personality was present at the guest table. When the hour for starting the feast arrived, the toastmaster, a very religious man, discovered that no minister of the gospel was present, and in the emergency he turned to this television personality and said, "Mr. So-and-so, inasmuch as there are no clergymen present, will you say grace?" The TV star rose, bowed his head, and in the midst of a very deep silence said fervently, "There being no clergymen present, let us thank god."

We like to poke fun at the varieties of religious experiments. An Episcopal pastor and a Roman Catholic priest had neighboring churches and did not get along very well, despite ecumenism. After some time, however, in the community they did meet and decided to forget past grievances. "For, after all," said the man of the Episcopal faith, "We are both doing the good lord's work." "That is true," said the priest, "Let us therefore do his work to the best of our ability, you in your way," concluded the Roman Catholic, and then added with a twinkle, "and I in his!"

You can see how tame these jokes are, because of the very serious way in which religion is approached in America. Some concern Art

Linkletter-type replies of children. For instance, the prodigal son was the subject of the Sunday School lesson and the minister, who had paused to visit the children's class, was dwelling on the character of the oldest brother. "But amidst all the enjoyment," said the preacher, "there was one to whom the preparation of the feast brought no joy; to whom the prodigal's return gave no happiness, only bitterness, one who did not approve of the feast and had no wish to attend it. Now, who can tell me who this was?" Silence for several minutes, then a hand raised and a small sympathetic voice said, "Please, sir, was it the fatted calf?"

Well, on the other hand, one has to be schooled in religion to even understand some of these. Some show the hostility that everyone has toward the clergy, somewhere down under. As the boat was sinking the skipper lifted his voice to ask, "Does anyone know how to pray?" The ship's chaplain eagerly made it up to the skipper. "Here I am, Captain, I do." The captain nodded. "That's good then," he declared. "You go ahead and pray. The rest of us are putting on lifebelts and we are one lifebelt short."

We are all trapped in our lives with a longwinded preacher somewhere, whether this is a P.T.A. meeting, a church or at a lodge meeting. These persons are enamored with their own voices and delighted to have captive audiences, and they don't know when to stop. A California judge who was an Atheist got trapped to go to a local church one Sunday, and sure enough, the preacher was extremely tedious and remarkably longwinded. After the service he had to pass the preacher in the vestibule, and the preacher, recognizing him, had to say something. "Well, your honor, how did you like the sermon?" "Oh, it was wonderful," replied the judge. "It was like the peace and mercy of god." "Oh, I scarcely hoped to achieve that," said the sky pilot, much flattered. "How can you make such a comparison?" he asked. The judge was trapped, and he was honest and had to say what he really believed. "Well, very easily," he said, as he started to the door. "It was like the peace of god because it passed all understanding and like his mercy, I thought it would endure forever."

Scotsmen sometimes say it quicker and better. Mrs. Gilfilian was talking to Mrs. MacLeod after they got out of the wee kirk. "Hoo do ye like that young mon we had today?" "Well, I had jist three faults to his sermon," replied the discerning Mrs. MacLeod. "And wha' were these?" "Weel," she said, "firstly, it was read. Secondly it wasna read weel, and thirdly, it wasna worth reading."

You will note that none of these jokes goes to the merit of the

case. The dogmas and creeds themselves are not attacked in the jesting. These are jokes in the periphery of religion. Anything which cannot take a ribbing is pretty sick. We are yet too close to the era of the *auto de fe* (burning at the stake) for a difference of opinion to make jokes in respect to religion. Only one person in America tried to do this: Lenny Bruce, who was put in jail for it so often that I can't count the times.

We need jokes. If you know any of them in respect to religious dogma or creeds, will you please put them on a postcard and mail them to me? It is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will put them into the speeches I give at universities. We need every laugh we can get in these grim days.

Meanwhile, my sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state, but not the separation of church and laughter. We can continue to broaden these broadcasts with gifts from you. A dollar from you and from the next fellow counts up. Don't wait till you can send us a small fortune. Just put a buck in the mail tonight instead. Our address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, or just Centre of Atheism, Austin, Texas or American Atheists, Austin, Texas. No matter what you put on the envelope, this is a small city (relatively) and we get all the mail. I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 36–February 3, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Tonight, let's talk about Chrisna. The Christians say that Jesus Christ was of supernatural and divine origin. He had a human being for a mother. This is important. He had a human being for a mother, but a god for a father. Although he was woman-conceived, he was deity-begotten, and molded in human form. The Christians also have always had a standing prophecy that a divine deliverer would descend from heaven and relieve them from their earthly state, and thus ameliorate their condition. Beginning with these two ideas, we must look at Chrisna.

Chrisna (Krishna) was the Indian Apollo. He is represented as Avatar often, or the incarnation of the divinity. At his birth, choirs of Devitas (this is the name of, or for, angels) sang hymns of praise while shepherds surrounded his cradle. It was necessary to conceal his birth from the tyrant ruler, Canso, to whom it had been foretold that an infant savior would destroy him. The child escaped with his parents beyond the coast of Lamouna. For a time he lived in obscurity, and then he commenced a public life distinguished for prowess and beneficence. He washed the feet of the Brahmins, the holy men of India, and then he preached the most excellent doctrines, but at length the power of his enemies prevailed. Before his untimely death he foretold the miseries which would take place in the Caliyuga or wicked (Dark?) ages of the world.

Chrisna taught his followers that they alone were the true believers of the saving faith. He threw down the barriers of caste. He elevated the dogmas of the faith above the sacerdotal class. He admitted everyone who felt an inward desire to the ministry to preach the religion. We know quite a bit about Chrisna. For instance, at the very moment of his conception a god left heaven to enter the womb of his mother, who was a virgin. Immediately after his birth he was recognized as a divine personage and it was predicted that he would

surpass all previous divine incarnations in holiness. Everyone adored him. Everyone saluted him and called him "god of gods."

When he was twenty years old he went into the desert and lived there in the austerest retirement. He lived in simplicity and virtue and spent his time in religious contemplation. He was tempted in the desert in several ways. But, through his self-denial, he resisted all the seductive approaches of sin. He declared, "Religion is my essence." He experienced a lively opposition from the priests attached to the ancient creeds. But he triumphed over his enemies after holding a discussion with them in the temples. He revised the existing code of morals and the social laws. He reduced the main principle of morality to four. These were 1) Mercy; 2) Aversion to cruelty; 3) Unbounded sympathy for all animate beings, and 4) The strictest adherence to the moral law. He also, in his ministry to the people, gave a decalogue of commandments. They were 1)Not to kill; 2) Not to steal; 3) To be chaste; 4) Not to testify falsely; 5) Not to lie; 6) Not to swear; 7) To avoid all impure words; 8) To be disinterested; 9) Not to take revenge and 10) Not to be superstitious. It had been prophesied in "olden times" in Indian religion that a person would arise and redeem Hindustan from the "yoke of bondage." We know this: "At midnight, when the birth of Chrisna was taking place, the clouds emitted low music and poured down a rain of flowers. The celestial child was greeted with hymns by the attending spirits. The room was illuminated by his light, the light coming from Chrisna, and the countenances of his father and mother emitted rays of glory and they both bowed in worship." The people believed he was god. At his birth a marvelous light illumined the earth.

His followers baptised and performed miraculous cures. When he was a child he attracted attention by his miracles. His life was devoted to mercy and charity. He left paradise from pure compassion, to die for suffering sinners. He sought to lead men to better paths and lives of virtue and rectitude. He suffered to atone for the sins of the entire world. But the sinner, through faith in him, could be saved. Chrisna proclaimed the equality of man in the sight of god.

There was a problem with Chrisna. He undertook and counseled a constant struggle against the body. In his eyes the body was the enemy of man's soul. He aimed to subdue the body and the passions which came to that body. To follow him required humility, the disregard of worldly wealth, patience and resignation to adversity, love of enemies, religious tolerance, non-resistance to evil, confession of sins, and conversion. Chrisna received as disciples the outcasts of Hindu society. Chrisna died at last between two thieves. He led a

pure and holy life, and was a meek, tender and benevolent being.

The birthplace of Chrisna was Mathura. If you remember your Bible you will know that this is similar to Maturea, between Nazareth and Egypt. There are many small tales of Chrisna. One day a woman came to him and anointed his hair with oil, and in return he healed her maladies. One of his first miracles was the healing of a leper. Chrisna was crucified. He descended into Hades. He rose from the dead and ascended to Voicontah (heaven). In the same tradition of Hinduism there is a story of creation of the antecedents of Hesus Christ. They were a man and a woman called Adimo and Heva. Does that sound to you like Adam and Eve? Three different races came from these antecedents. They are traceable to three descendents of Adam and Eve—Oh! I am sorry—of Adimo and Heva, called Sherma, Hama and Jiapheta. Does this sound to you like Shem, and Ham and Japeth? Chrisna's mother was Maia. Chrisna's full name was Chrisna Zeus, or Zeus Chrisna or Jeseus Chrisna or Jesus Chrisna.

Let's look at Maia, his mother. She was pure and chaste. No animal food ever touched her lips. Honey and milk were her only sustenance. One evening, as she was praying, she was overshadowed by the spirit of god and she conceived god Chrisna in her womb then and there.

Chrisna chose twelve disciples to aid him in propagating his doctrines. He spent most of his time working miracles, resuscitating the dead, healing lepers, restoring the deaf and the blind, defending the weak against the strong, and in proclaiming his divine mission to redeem man from original sin. He wanted to banish evil and restore the reign of good. He came to Earth because Brahma sent his son Chrisna upon the earth to die for the salvation of man. The title of Jeseus was given to him because it means "pure." He was called the "Promised of god" and "Messiah." When he spoke it was often from a mount. He also spoke in parables.

One of his parables is quite famous in India. A fisherman was much persecuted by his neighbors, but in a time of a severe famine when his neighbors were suffering and dying for the want of food, he carried food to these same persecuting neighbors, because he was so noble as to return good for evil, and he thus saved them from starvation. When Chrisna told this parable, he concluded it by saying, "Therefore, do good to all, both the evil and the good, even to your enemies."

Once, when he entered the city of Madura, the people came out in flocks and strewed branches for him to walk on as he entered the city. Chrisna had a favorite disciple, Adjourna, and he had another

disciple by the name of Angada, who followed him to the Ganges River and there betrayed him. When Chrisna's last hours came, he went to the bank of the Ganges and performed three ablutions, and looking up at the heavens, he prayed to Brahma. He was nailed then to the cross, but the wood on which he was suspended became suddenly covered with great red flowers which diffused their fragrance all around him.

Who was Chrisna? We are told that he was born in the year B.C. 1200 in India. He was born on December 25th (that is the Indian month of Savarana) at midnight. He descended into hell to preach to the inmates of that dark and dreary prison when he died. Now honestly, just between the two of us, don't you think it is possible that somewhere along the line of the development of the Christian religion, there was a savior needed, and that Chrisna sounded too good to be true? Perhaps he is our Jesus Christ, taken out of time and out of context. Don't you think that we really need some decent scholarly research to establish whence the idea of Jesus Christ came?

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the separation of church and state. You may reach us with comments and contributions at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will be back with you next week, same day, same time, same station. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 37—February 10, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

LETTER OF A DOCTOR TO HIS SON

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I have here a letter written by a very prominent doctor who lives in West Virginia, written to his son on his son's twenty first birthday. I have his permission to read the letter to you.

Dear Son:

I think it is time for me to write you something about religion. You are now twenty one years of age, with the maturity to enable you to make your own decisions about this subject.

First, what is religion? Is it a spiritual attitude, a way of life in relation to other people, a code of conduct? Or is it an organization with temples, mosques, churches and shrines, run by priests, ministers, rabbis, dervishes, or on the primitive level, by medicine men or magicians, jealous of their power and privileges, seeking to compel discipline and compliance with ecclesiastical ordinances and sectarian beliefs?

Fallible human beings, groping in the darkness for the light of "truth" have wandered into strange byways of superstition, bigotry, fanaticism and mania. The spiritual essence of religion, in its true sense of a kindly and helpful attitude toward others, a desire to do justice with mercy, to console the unfortunate, to fight evil, and to practice the Golden Rule, has been largely smothered under the weight of sectarian organization, cold ecclesiastical autocracy and insistence that the fantastic marvels of scriptural folklore be accepted "on faith" as gospel truth.

After these many centuries of the multiplication and proliferation of sects, hierarchies and doctrinal writings, how can one disentangle the skein and find the simple golden thread of truth? Every religion, except the most primitive, has its sacred book, and the more fiercely fanatical of that religion's adherents demand strict and unquestioning obedience to its tenets, no matter how contrary they may be to reason, science and justice. The Christian

has his Bible, the Moslem his Koran, the Hebrew his Talmud, the Hindu his epic poems and Bhagavata-purana, and the other sects have equivalent "sacred" writings.

The Christian Bible is one of the greatest literary monuments in our language, due mainly to the genius of John Wycliffe. Fearful that laymen might interpret the scriptures for themselves and thus diminish the power of the clergy to control them, the hierarchy preserved the scriptures in Latin for centuries.Wycliffe's translation into English was of transcendent beauty and majesty. The venom of the clergy was so great that after his death, his bones were ordered to be dug up and burned and the ashes thrown into a river.

Later a committee set up by King James edited and published what is now known as the King James version, closely following the poetic and exalted rhetoric of Wycliffe, and of a latter translator, William Tyndale, and also decreeing, somewhat capriciously, which books or sections were "canonical" and which were spurious. The latter are now published separately, as the Apocrypha. Finally in modern times, even the Roman Catholic Church has had to issue the Bible in the vernacular, called the "Douay" version; but the service of the church is still given today in Latin.

The various religions have their originators or leaders, such as Jesus, Mohammed, Moses, Buddha and Confucius, whose sayings and deeds, real or imaginary, are recorded in the sacred writings. Jesus was evidently a man of great spirituality, wisdom, courage, humility and compassion. His ethical precepts, especially the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," still express today the highest standards of human conduct.

But he lived in an age of ignorance and superstition when such things as eclipses, earthquakes and floods were reckoned as supernatural, resulting from the wrath of an angry and vengeful god. There was no printing, no accurate verification or recording of contemporary events. Happenings were reported by word of mouth, and inevitably elaborated and embellished by the narrators of the wondrous tales, seeking humanly to impress their simple audiences. The deeds of the religious heroes were vested with magic and built up gradually into marvelous and supernatural phenomena. Not until generations had passed were they even written down, so far as we know, and by then had been distorted by superstitious imaginations out of all resemblance to actual events.

Nearly every religion, living or dead (for there are many extinct religions and abandoned gods) has some equivalent of the virgin birth. Many have an equivalent of the resurrection. Some have the concept of an angry and violent god, who punishes and afflicts. Some conceive of the god as a magnified human, a kindly father, benevolent and merciful, supposedly omniscient and omnipotent–yet powerless to prevent the existence of evil, personified as a sort of anti-god, called the devil. Some think they may appease the "wrath of god" by sacrifices, entreaties, flattery, prayers and self-abasement.

Fierce and bloody wars have been fought over religious differences; crusades have been undertaken against infidels, massacres have occurred like that of St. Bartholomew's Eve; dreadful tortures have been inflicted upon heretics, like the iron boot that pressed the very marrow out of shin bones, the rack that pulled arms and legs out of their sockets, and hot pokers that burned out the victim's eyes. The laws of the state were written by fanatical ecclesiastics who stood in the way of the advancement of science, of learning, of medicine, and of democratic liberty and individual rights. (Some day, if this phase should interest you, read *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology* by Andrew D. White, President of Cornell University, Professor of History, member of the Legion of Honor, Royal Academy of Sciences, etc.)

In the Christian religion, the Fundamentalists insist on a literal interpretation of the Bible. They make themselves believe that Jonah lived in the belly of a whale, that Jesus walked on the water, floated through the air, appeared and disappeared at will, rose bodily from the tomb, could bring the dead back to life and heal the sick by touching them with his hands. The non-Fundamentalists attempt to rationalize these categorical statements in the Bible as "symbolic" or "metaphoric" rather than literal, and thus make some compromise with the modern intelligent mind.

Most humans seek something to lean on, a crutch or a support. This is especially true of women, and they are the main reliance of the priesthood, the most numerous attendants in the temples. Many people derive a comfort and solace out of belief and faith, that is psychologically helpful to them. It has been said, if there were no gods, men would have to invent some to fill their need. People distressed by the miseries of meager and sorrowful lives on earth are buoyed up by hopes of Valhalla, or Mt. Olympus, or

Mohammedan paradise, or Christian heaven, where all will be bliss for all eternity. The priests have also invented a purgatory and a hell to frighten the doubters and the disobedient.

Many priests and ministers do a lot of good, as dedicated human beings, in the sphere of social service. They help the orphan, comfort the bereaved, try to inculcate good moral standards according to their lights and combat social evils. This, too, is called religion. But it is really in the realm of ethics, and social service, rather than in the field of dogma, ecclesiastical tenets and faith in the supernatural.

The Bible says, "No man hath seen god at any time." There is no evidence whatever that any of the supernatural claims of the various theological organizations is true. Therefore your are exhorted to put aside your reason and intelligence and accept these mysteries and pretensions on "faith."

Maybe there is, somewhere in the infinite, a central source of spiritual strength and inspiration to which men can at times attune themselves as a radio is tuned to a certain wave length, and that this accounts for certain amazing achievements of the human mind, in music, in art, in science, in literature, which we speak of as "divinely inspired." But if there be such, it is a force vastly different from the theological concept of a personified god with magnified human attributes.

"Believe," they tell you, "and you will be saved." To be "saved" in their parlance means to accept their particular brand of dogma. I do not think that credence in unbelievable supernaturalism is necessary. I think that if you try to be honest, kindly, compassionate and do good to others according to the Golden Rule, you will have true religion as contrasted with fanaticism, supernaturalism, and rigid sectarianism.

Professional ecclesiastics want to get possession of the minds of people while they are young, before they are able to analyze and to reason. That is why Catholics want separate parochial schools. They want to inculcate their doctrines early and firmly with liberal use of emotion rather than reason, before the child has any judgment. This early seeding, plus fear of punishment in "hell" (though its terrors are at long last fading) usually does the trick.

Most preachers depend on emotion to carry the day. They cannot appeal to reason, so they seek to create waves of dramatic emotional feeling, that in backwoods areas descends to the level of hysteria, with shouting, twitching, and gasping. Others talk

solely of ethics and morals, glossing over the thorny matters of the miraculous and the supernatural, which the devotees are nevertheless required to believe as a condition of formal membership.

Many attend and support churches because their forefathers did, because it is socially "the thing to do," because there they meet their friends, and because there is behind the churches and mosques and tabernacles and cathedrals, the tradition of centuries. They do not face up to, or analyze, the supernatural claims they are required to accept.

When you were a youngster I strongly opposed the effort to push you into a church organization and make you conform at that time. I believe that the choice of submission to churchly authority, or independence of it in favor of an inner and personal religious life, is a matter for adult decision.

You are now twenty one. I want you to feel completely free of any mental compulsion from me, either to believe or disbelieve what any of the various sects teach or promote. If you want to attend, or to join, any church then do so, without regard for my views. I cannot, with any sincerity, accept the supernatural doctrines, the gestures, the genuflexions, the costuming, and pageantry of ecclesiastical services, so I do not attend. But, I try, nevertheless, to be religious in the spiritual personal sense of the Golden Rule. If I fail at times, that is because I am human, as are we all. But it is well to have a standard, a code to measure by.

These thoughts have been of help to me, and I hope they may be also to you. With my love, as always,

Your Father

This program is sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational association dedicated to the complete separation of church and state, and to the inspection of the claims of religion, organized and unorganized, in whatsoever form that religious idea takes.

We broadcast once a week to you and I will be back next week, same time, same station, same day of the week. We continue these programs with your assistance, and any contribution helps. Send it to the Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, Zip code 78767. We can enlarge and extend the programs with your help. Meanwhile, thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 38—February 17, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

REWRITING OF HISTORY BY CHRISTIANS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Probably the single thing which angers Atheists more than any other practice of Christianity is the insistence the religious community of Christians has on bending the facts of history to conform with their ideas and beliefs.

Sherman Wakefield, who is married to Robert Ingersoll's granddaughter, has undertaken a study of some of the specific instances when such liberties have been taken with history itself. He became particularly aroused at President Eisenhower at one point, and wrote a short rebuttal to one of the president's activities. This is it. I quote with Sherman's permission.

On Washington's birthday, President and Mrs. Eisenhower attended services in Christ Episcopal Church of Alexandria, Virginia, where George Washington was a vestryman and occupied pew number sixty. The service was conducted by the Reverend Braxton Bragg Comer Lile, the rector, who did not tell his congregation that Washington refused to take communion and walked out of the church before each communion service. When taken to task by the Reverend James Abercromie of Philadelphia for this conduct, Washington stayed away from church entirely on communion Sundays. However, according to tradition in the parish church, the Reverend Mr. Lile read Washington's so-called "prayer."

Now, this "prayer" has been known to New Yorkers for some years, as it is inscribed on a bronze tablet adjoining the Washington pew in St. Paul's chapel in that city. As a prayer, this is a forgery, as it was made up from a circular letter which General Washington addressed to the governors of the thirteen states upon his disbanding the army, dated Newburg, June 8, 1783.

The "prayer" was manufactured from the last paragraph of Washington's letter by omitting words in the original and replac-

ing them with words of divine petition. The letter was addressed to the respective governors of the states, and not to god, and the original "you" was changed to "thou" in the prayer. The text of the "prayer" follows, with additions as I will note. This is the "prayer."

Almighty god, we make our earnest prayer that *Thou wilt keep these United States in Thy holy* protection, that *Thou wilt* incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another *and* for their fellow citizens and the United States at large. And finally that *Thou wilt* most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion and without an humble imitation of Whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. *Grant our supplication, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*"

Now I have italicized in the text I am reading the insertions which were put into this letter in order to read into it an actual prayer to god. Since you can't see the italics on a radio program, let me see how I can explain this forgery to you.

The original letter from which this "prayer" was manufactured is to be found in W.C. Ford's edition of Washington's *Writings* (Volume 10, pages 254 to 265) and also in the official government edition of Washington's *Writings*, edited by J.C. Fitzpatrick (Volume 24, pages 483 to 496)."

The text of the last paragraph of the original letter follows, and includes the words that the prayer-makers omitted. Again I have these italicized in the text I am reading, but I think you will see the difference immediately in any event.

"*I now make it my* earnest prayer that *God would have you and the State over which you preside*, in *His* holy protection, that *He would* incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large, *and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field,* and finally, that *He would* most graciously be pleased to dispose us all, to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without an humble

imitation whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. *I have the honor to be, with much esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant. George Washington.*

Now, the amount of material in this short paragraph which has been omitted and changed to make the "prayer" is about one third of the whole, thus making the "prayer" a real pious fraud. When Washington wrote the governors it was his "earnest prayer" he meant, of course, his earnest wish, and his use of the word "prayer" according to the custom of his day, does not justify forging a letter into a prayer to a diety.

Washington never actually penned any of the thirteen letters to the governors, and they were written by different aides on different days. The copy written on June 8, 1783, as published, was penned by David Cobb. Washington may have made the original dictation, or furnished the ideas expressed in the letters, but they may also have been piously embellished by those who wrote them, after the custom of those times. In any event, the last phrase of the "prayer," which is similar to the Episcopal prayer book, is not in Washington's style and nowhere else in his writings does he mention Jesus Christ by name.

The fact of this forgery has been pointed out to the officials of the St. Paul's Chapel and Trinity Church many times in past years, but the bronze tablet remains in the church, and, in addition, the "prayer" is inscribed on a large framed background which rests in the Washington pew and is much easier to read than the tablet itself. This is all in spite of the fact that in 1935 a group of Atheists sued Trinity Church for capitilizing on a fraud, during which suit the alteration was admitted, but was justified as making the quotation "appropriate for display and distribution in a place of religious worship." "

This is by a leading representative of Christianity which claims to be the arbiter of our morality.

Sherman Wakefield spends much of his time tracing down some of the forgeries in American history which the churches have perpetuated, and he gets more and more furious with each one he uncovers. And so do we all. He became quite incensed over Abraham Lincoln's alleged letter to Mrs. Bixby. He began to trace the original letter and readily found several facsimiles–only to discover that there were several variations in the handwriting, discrepancies in the formation of single letters, entire words between the two. Mr. Wakefield has facsimiles of three of these letters, all with differences in

handwriting and text, and he queries, "If facsimiles from a supposed original document do not agree among themselves, which one, if any, is correct?" The two most famous copies stemmed one from Michael F. Tobin, a dealer in pictures and prints in New York City, who applied to the Librarian of Congress for a copyright on a facsimile on April 25, 1891. This was about thirty years after the letter was written. Later in the same year, Huber's Museum, which dealt in a collection of freaks and fakes of various kinds, started to exhibit a document which was claimed to be the original.

The letter was supposed to have been written on November 21, 1864, and sent directly to Adjutant General Schouler in Boston, who delivered it in person to Mrs. Bixby on November 25th. Mrs. Bixby is said to have lost five sons in the Civil War. Yet strangely, a search of the records reveals that two were killed in battle (Charles and Oliver), one was honorably discharged (Henry), and two deserted to the enemy (Edward and George). The Bixby letter is much quoted, because in this Lincoln, who was known as a non-believer in religion, was purportedly to have said, "I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement."

The battle over these letters has been long and enduring and the authenticity of the three quite different facsimiles of the original letter has not been a barrier to the Christian community's intent endeavors to authenticate this as a true Lincoln letter, and after its having found its way into a number of Lincoln's collected works, the stamp of authority is now upon the letter.

Completely ignored are three rather striking documents.* One, written by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, a president of Columbia University, in which was recounted a story giving the authorship of this letter to a Lincoln secretary, John Hay; the second document is a letter from Rev. Gildart Arthur Jackson, in which it is recounted that Lincoln had instructed Hay to write a suitable letter of condolence and that Hay had done so. Herndon, a Lincoln friend, recounts that Lincoln once made him erase the word 'god' from a speech which he had written because the language indicated a personal god, whereas Lincoln "insisted no such personality ever existed." In the original drafts of the Gettysburg Address, twice Lincoln wrote out that speech without mention of this nation "under God", an insertion later suggested by ~~Simon~~ P. Chase, a member of his cabinet.

We wish our Christian brothers would be honest and permit us

* *Across the Busy Years*, Vol. III, 1940, pp. 390-93; *Postbag Diversion* Ed. Edward Verrall Lucas, London 1934; ~~*The Hidden Lincoln*~~, Herndon, Ed. Paul Angle, 1938, p. 360. Life of Lincoln

our heroes. We do not deny them theirs.

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Program 39—February 24, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

ATHEIST RECOGNITION

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

Every time that I become convinced that I am turning cynic, something happens which reassures me that all is right with the world in a number of quarters and that everywhere people will be mentally liberated some day.

This week I was called by telephone to get to Florida immediately, that I was wanted on a symposium which was meeting at the university there. The call came from the S.O.S. lecture agency in New York, and was urgent. This was all the information I had, and within hours I was on a jet to Dallas, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Florida.

Some students met me at the airport in a 1969 Buick, which staggered me, for usually their cars are not so plush. It was not until three days later that I found out that the automobile was one of eighteen which had been "on loan" to the university from local automobile dealers for the symposium which I attended.

The boys told me that they had scheduled an appearance for me (the first of many) for the following day, but that Jane Housted had fallen and broken some ribs and I was going to take her place *that evening.* They had forgotten to bring along the speech which was then being given at the university, which I was supposed to rebut. We got to the university just as the applause was dying for the last speaker (my opponent) and on the stage when I was being introduced I found out who he was and what the subject matter was.

For three days then I spoke and heard speeches. I took over classes. I was on panels; I had debates, in the most exciting program at a university that I had ever seen in ten years now. I discovered why I had to take Jane Housted's place. When the university first announced its program of speakers for this year, calling the program "Accent" and sub-titling it "Dimensions of Protest," the information was released to the news media. Almost instantly a woman in Gainesville, Florida, where the university is located, began a prayer

campaign that god would intervene and strike me down so that I could not make it to Florida. When it was announced, publicly, that the only other woman invited, Jane Housted, had fallen when she was boarding the plane in New York City and had broken three ribs, the young people in the university were caught up in the joke that god's wrath had fallen upon the wrong woman. It was the joke of the entire symposium. What was no joke at all was that I was intentionally invited there to represent Atheism, and as such the other speakers, who were more adequately informed of the symposium than I had been, were quite aware of this.

I met them all. I had cocktails with them. We sat down at the same table together. We joked and argued together. We appeared on the same stages together. For once, some heads of state sat equal with the head of Atheism. Who were they? Would you believe Senator Strom Thurmond and his wife? Would you believe Senator Wayne Morse? Since I am an admirer of his, I was thrilled beyond words when he came over to me at a luncheon one afternoon to begin our conversation: "You are Madalyn Murray." I laughed and he said, "Well, I'm Wayne Morse," and then we talked. Melvin Belli was there, and at one dinner, when we were standing by the microphone, he gave me a public hug.

Julian Bond was probably the only person who even mentioned religion when he told a question-and-answer-period student-questioner that the answer to his question, which concerned religion, could be found with the expert, motioning to me. It brought the house down.

No grace was said at any table at any time during all those three days. Nothing opened with a prayer. We fought bitter battles there over the war in Viet Nam, over the use of pot by young people, over the fight for civil liberties in America. In every instance my opinion was sought, we all equally had our say, and then 4,500 students in the Plaza of the Americas gave me a standing ovation! Well, up to now I had thought the high point of my appearance career had been when I appeared on the Johnny Carson show. I was impressed. The people who saw and heard my reception by the students were impressed.

Atheism is here to stay in America. We can't be burned at the stake any more. I think that when history is written, it will say that Madalyn Murray O'Hair was the last Atheist who was ever put into jail in America. I have been in jail six times during this ten year fight which I have had to make Atheism a respectable word in America. The religious community knows now that they cannot do anything

but meet us face to face and have it out intellectually. The fight was easier for them when they could kill us, burn us at the stake or put us in jail. But, with the light of public opinion on them now, they cannot.

The politician is going to learn a little later now that the Atheist community must be reckoned with. This is the first time ever in the history of America that government leaders appeared on the same program as a head of an Atheist movement. Let me tell you who-all was there:

Ray Osborne, the Lieutenant-Governor of Florida; Lou Harris, the head of the Harris public opinion polls; John Finlator, associate director of the Brueau of Narcotics; Frederick Flott, special assistant to Henry Cabot Lodge in Viet Nam for the last three and a half years; Julian Bond, leader of the Georgia delegation of insurgents to the Democratic national convention, and now the first seated Negro member of the Georgia House of Representatives; Michael Harrington, social analyst and critic, who wrote *The Accidental Century*, *Toward a Democratic Left* and *The Other America*; William M. Kunstler, civil rights attorney who has represented Martin Luther King, Adam Clayton Powell, Jack Ruby; Melvin Belli, chief legal counsel for Jack Ruby and a famous defense attorney; Senator Strom Thurmond from South Carolina (and his wife); Senator Wayne Morse from Oregon; William O. Douglas, associate justice of the United States Supreme Court (with his lovely wife).

The University of Florida undertook this symposium because it believed that a university's reason for being is to offer a forum for all points of view, to be a marketplace of ideas and principles, and to show the application to life of those ideas and principles. The fundamental assumption on which our nation was founded is that the truth emerges from the conflict of opposing views, and that this is based on public debate and public presentations and public understanding which flows from this process. Religion has never permitted the other side to be heard.

Earlier this month I was invited to Cincinnati, Ohio, to do a one hour "talk" television show on a very popular program there called the Dennis Wholey Show. What happened there is what always happens whenever I appear anywhere. The response is such a burst that further scheduling is managed impromptu. So the producer of the show, at the behest of the management of the station (this station is owned by the conservative Republican Taft family of Ohio), put first a one hour show of discussion, and the following day, presented a one hour show of questions and answers.

The format is always the same: there is one Roman Catholic, one Jew, one Protestant and one Atheist–me! This is a "balanced" show. It means, of course, that I am reduced immediately to a fifteen minute presentation out of one hour of prime time of television, since three quarters of the program is given to religious representation. Then, as soon as I leave town, all three of the so-called denominations demand equal time to rebut anything I may have said, which is always easier to rebut when I am not there.

The Christian-Judeo community has had 1,619 years to present their arguments with no voice raised against them which could endure. Today in America they are on radio, television and in the press twenty four hours a day in thousands of cities and municipalities in America. Yet, they are so fearful of any voice in opposition that they attempt to shut me off whenever and however they can. The second day of the Dennis Wholey Show, so many thousands of calls were recorded that the network programming was interrupted to carry the "question and answer" period for an additional half hour of prime time. This never fails. It is not because I am such a tremendous speaker. It is because the issue is so vital in America today. People want to talk about religion. People want to discuss it more openly. People want more information.

Recently I was on a "talk" radio show in San Francisco and the popular personality who ran the show was bragging to me of the guests he had had there who had brought in 2,700 telephone calls during the show. He was staggered when the meter counter indicated that there were 30,000 calls during the time I was on the air.

I look now at my calendar and cannot believe it. How can I, in one month's time, speak at Fairleigh Dickinson College, Drew University, the University of Florida, Rice University and Georgia Tech, in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Texas and Georgia, and to have interspersed among those appearances, radio and television appearances on WITF-TV in Pennsylvania for network distribution on NET television, a one hour show; one hour on KGO radio in Los Angeles, California; one hour on WPEN radio in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; two and a half hours on WKRC-TV; prime time on the Dennis Wholey Show; one hour on KNEW radio in San Francisco, California; one hour on a telephone hook-up and closed circuit TV with the University of Michigan pilot program; one hour of prime time on the "Atlanta Now" television show out of Atlanta, Georgia, and negotiations for appearances at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana and the Lutheran College in Seguin, Texas?

These demands upon me are because religion is being questioned

by everyone at all levels in American society today. The producers and managers and directors are always stunned when I get as many responses favoring my position as I get attacking it. People want to know. People want to hear the other side now. My faith in people is borne out. Everyone is just like you and just like me. If given a chance, they can reach out to make a better world for everyone, where reason and justice are commonplace.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization. Your gifts will help us to carry these radio broadcasts to other localities. We also sell books, pamphlets and tapes. For a list of these, or to send a contribution, just write, S.O.S., P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767. Meanwhile, I will be back with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 40–March 3, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

INTERVIEW WITH AN ATHEIST
"LEN"–Part I

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist back to talk with you again.

Tonight I am in Pennsylvania, where I have been invited to speak on television and radio, and during the time I am here, of course, I am visiting Atheist friends. I would like to introduce you to some of them tonight, please. First off, I am in the home of a gentleman by the name of Len, and I want to talk to him extensively for one program. Then we will follow this with several others during this month, here on the American Atheist series.

MM: Len, you have been generous enough to give us–the Society of Separationists–enough money to fund this entire radio series for one complete year. Whatever made you do this?

Len: I like to put my money where my mouth is.

MM: Fine. Let me introduce you to the radio audience if I may. Will you tell us how old you are?

Len: Fifty eight.

MM: You are no kid then, who is just an Atheist by being in revolt against his parents.

Len: No, although I did revolt at one time. I can be very revolting.

MM: I guess everyone can be. Len, what is your occupation?

Len: I am an engineer and a manufacturer.

MM: That's fine. As a matter of fact you manufactured and assembled the equipment on which we tape and broadcast, isn't that right?

Len: That's right.

MM: It is very excellent equipment, I must say. So that you are really involved. As I visit with you tonight, I find out that you have a whole den of Atheists here and that you are more or less a community leader in the Atheist family in Pennsylvania. Len, tell me something. You have ten minutes maybe. Why are *you* an Atheist? What on earth do you think an Atheist is?

Len: First of all, you flatter me. I am not a leader. I simply found out after I got past the half-century mark, and no longer was too afraid to talk, that if I mentioned my true beliefs to people, most of them had the same beliefs. They had been just as afraid as I had been to say anything to anybody.

MM: I am delighted to hear that. I think that many of the Atheists in our audience will be too. Why did you speak up?

Len: Oh, for a number of reasons. I had an unsuccessful marriage which I terminated after twenty seven years. There were children involved, and I did not want them to have to take sides, so we sort of skirted around the issue. The children were allowed to attend church or not, as they saw fit. They were never particularly sent. After the divorce, and a couple of years of licking my wounds, I had a little bit more time to start thinking as an individual. My thoughts had run along these lines for a long time. Are you interested in my going way on back?

MM: Yes, I would like just that. You said that you were married for twenty seven years and that you had children and that they could or could not go to church as they saw fit. What religions are you talking about? What was your wife, and what were you? How did you rear your children? That is a big problem for Atheists, and I would like you to speak on that for a few moments.

Len: Let's go on back and start with me. My father called himself agnostic, which may be a weasel-word for Atheist. But, at least he did not belong to a church. My mother was Jewish. When I was twelve years old my mother decided that it was time for me to prepare to become a man. In the Jewish faith, when you are age thirteen, you are supposed to be bar mitzvahed. Now that makes you a man.

MM: Is that true, Len?

Len: That's what they told me. My mother sent me to a synagogue nearby to start the indoctrination, and I faithfully went a few times, possibly three or four. I just could not buy what they were giving me. They were a little bit too rich for my blood. It sort of aroused my curiosity, and I got a Bible, and for the first time I sat down and read it. And at first, I could not believe that they could have that stuff in a Bible, I must say!

MM: Really, now, we have to be serious and not laugh at our good religious neighbors and friends.

Len: I am not laughing at anyone. I am just thinking of myself as a

twelve-year-old boy starting off in *Genesis* and reading stuff that I could not buy on a newsstand. I finally decided that this was not for me. Now, up until that time, I had never defied my mother. By the time I worked up enough courage to tell her that I was not going to be bar mitzvahed, I overshot and told her I was not going to be any damned Jew, which broke her heart, among other things. Now, it did get me interested in religion, though, and I felt, well, I was led to believe, that everyone had a religion, had to have a religion, and you must believe and I felt that I was missing something. So I started by reading every Bible that I could get in English, and then later a couple in Spanish, which was the only other language I could do anything with.

MM: Len, was all this going on in Pennsylvania?

Len: Yes, as a matter of fact, I was born in New Jersey. But my parents moved to Pennsylvania when I was six years old, so for all practical purposes I have lived my life in Pennsylvania. I kept reading those Bibles and the main thing I noticed was the similarity. They may have put more stress on one thing in one faith than the other, but they all—all the religions as they were practiced by the church, anyhow—or most of them at least, had the same idea of deification.

MM: Let me ask you a couple of things though here. You say that you read different Bibles. Did.you read the Koran?

Len: An English translation.

MM: And the Torah?

Len: Well, the Talmud and the Torah.

MM: Did you read the Upanishads, or any of the Eastern books?

Len: I even read some Zoroastrian stuff that I had.

MM: So then you feel that you had a fairly thorough scrutiny at that level of maturity and education et cetera?

Len: Yes. Of course, I was not satisfied with that. I was still looking for religion when I went to college. I did join some Bible classes and I took some courses in comparative religion. I almost married a choir singer and Sunday school teacher.

MM: I want to do several interviews with you, Len, so let's try to direct this a little bit if I may. You did get married though, and what was the faith of the woman whom you married?

Len: Christian Science.

MM: What about the children when you did have children?

Len: Well, we agreed, before the children were born, that we would let them choose their own faith if they wanted one, or any.

They could go to church with their friends if they wanted to, or they could stay home. They were not sent.

MM: Let me ask you one more question. Do you know what your—you said your father was Agnostic—do you know what religion his family was?

Len: Yes, Greek Orthodox. I think some Jewish in my grandparents.

MM: So that you had some intimate knowledge, just from living in the family, concerned with Greek Orthodoxy, with Judaism, with Christian Science, alone?

Len: That's right.

MM: Fine. Well then, what about your children? Did you actually start them into the Christian Science Church or religion at all?

Len: No. The only—I have a daughter and a son—the daughter was the only one who joined a church.

MM: What church did she join?

Len: The Roman Catholic.

MM: Oh! What happened?

Len: I am guilty. No, seriously, at the time that she and her prospective husband came to me for permission to be engaged, knowing that he was Roman Catholic, and being pretty sure that he would not change, I suggested that she accept his faith, mainly so that the children would not have to choose up sides. Now, of course, they were too young and inexperienced to be thinking in advance about children. At the time both of them assured me that, "Oh, no, it did not mean anything, she was not going to join," but a few weeks later I found out that she had started catechism. I even offered to go through it with her, although, as a sidelight, she did not even know what the word 'catechism' meant. I had to show it to her in a dictionary.

MM: All right. Well then, what happened with your son? Did he—did you try to persuade your children, or encourage them to stay away or to go to church? How did you confront this situation?

Len: I felt that if they had a feeling, if they felt a need for religion, and if it would benefit them, then they might as well go ahead. Although my daughter didn't talk to me for a month when I told her that if she was going to be a Catholic, at least to be a good one.

MM: Well, how did you—what did you do about giving your children standards of morality and so on? Because you know, of course, that the religious leaders claim that they have an ex-

clusive franchise on ethics and morality.

Len: I have always believed that children are much more in need of example than they are of sermons. I might have gone too far, and you may not even believe this, but in all my children's lives–and I am a grandfather now–I never lied to them, even about Santa Claus. I never broke a promise. They never saw me gamble. They never saw me steal, or cheat, or get into a fight. Oh, I never said that I never did any of these things, but my kids never saw me do any of them. I thought that this was the best sermon that I could preach.

MM: Well, Len, I think that's–I think that that is beautiful, if you will forgive my being corny tonight.

Len: I am not sure that it worked, because it might have set up a gap between us if I set myself on too high a pedestal. They might have had to think, well, the old man is crocked.

MM: Oh, I don't know if that is true though. I think I believe with you that example is the only way that we can teach, and it is as Saint Paul said, 'It is not by our words, but by our deeds that ye shall know us." So that it is important, I feel, always to give the children the proper example in anything such as this. Well, Len, when did you come to the realization after all this experimentation and with all of these faiths, and intimate relationships with persons involved with them, that you could actually speak up and become an Atheist? You started to tell us about it. Would you finish it?

Len: Due to an unfortunate experience which my daughter had, which made her leave the Roman Catholic Church, I felt free, at last, to speak frankly the thoughts that I had had for a long time.

MM: Oh, well, this was out of consideration for your family then, perhaps, that you kept quiet?

Len: Well, I did not want to get them involved, because when you use the word Atheist, particularly with people who do not know what it means, sometimes you get a very violent reaction. We are in about a 97 per cent Roman Catholic area here, and I did not want to stigmatize my family.

MM: I think, of course, that is very considerate. I am wondering, as you meet other Atheists, is this about the kind of reasoning that they have behind their silence?

Len: I cannot speak for all of them, but I can think of a few now who have grown children, who would not express themselves when they had small children, so I assume that they had the

same motives.

MM: Len, even at the danger of looking a gift horse in the mouth, you know, of course, that there are many, many of us who do not agree with this. I myself have gone ahead and embroiled my children in a considerable amount of controversy when they were of tender years, and I have done this because I believe that it was extremely important and extremely urgent to go ahead and express my own convictions in the community, irrespective of the age of my children. I am constantly meeting other Atheists in other cities who do the same kind of thing and around whom the same kind of controversy flows. I do appreciate your particular financial support and the kind of assistance you have given us constantly, but despite this I have to disagree with you.

Len, I wanted particularly to talk to you about this, but we are out of time for this evening. May I have another tape from you for next week and we will get a little deeper into this then?

Len: O.K. I will do my best.

That's all for this evening. I will be back with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, and we are financed by the sale of booklets, records and tapes, and by any gifts which you send to us at P.O. Box 2117 , Austin, Texas. We are talking with an Atheist tonight. If you would like a transcript of this particular program, you can find out about it by sending to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

We are a non-proft, non-political, educational organization, as you know from listening tc us before. Please address correspondence, or your gift, to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I do thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 41–March 10, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

INTERVIEW WITH AN ATHEIST
"LEN"–Part II

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I am in Philadelphia, as I have been, doing this series, trying to interview some Atheists here and to find out from them some things which will be of information and importance to you, to help you understand how we tick.

MM: Len, I talked to you last night and I would like to ask you a couple more questions today. I think that the most important question you could answer, the one that would be the best to speak on, is this: why can't you just be an ordinary Atheist who keeps his mouth shut, does not fight for his convictions, goes along with the crowd? Instead of that, you are a trouble-maker! Because you are fighting for your rights and you are trying to get a voice in the community here. You are attempting to see that Atheists are able to identify themselves as they should. Now why don't you just keep quiet and permit the religious folks to go on their own way while you do whatever you want to do?

Len: I don't consider myself a trouble-maker. But, after I passed my fiftieth year, I sort of got tired of being badgered into this thing. I don't think that we should have pressure on us, from what I consider a minority, to do certain things because they have dictated the actions to us. I feel that I have a right, as an American, as a citizen, as a–I consider myself a mature adult –to have an opinion, and I think that my opinion is based on a lot more thinking. It is a lot more to 'think' than just to 'believe.' I spent enough years thinking and I think that I am just as capable of thought, and just as entitled to my opinion, as anyone else.

MM: Well, one of the things that the religious communuty constantly says to us is, 'All right, we have our beliefs and you have

yours; why don't you just keep your mouth shut and let us go on our way? I would like you to develop that theme just a little bit. This was the charge which was directed, for instance, at my son. If I did not like the prayers in the public school, he could just sit there and listen to them. He did not have to participate in them.

Len: I do not think that it is a case of keeping our mouths shut as they do, because they prosyletize. Also, if they have the right or the privilege of expressing their thoughts, I think that I have an equal right. I am not trying to convert anybody. Certainly I would never degrade myself by entering into a quarrel. I think that I know the difference between a quarrel and an argument. When it gets down to name-calling, I am going to be the first one to back off. But, I think that most people—no, I should not say most people—I will speak for myself, I had been taught as a child and in early youth to always be very respectful of anybody else's religious beliefs. I had also been taught that if anybody expressed anything negative about my religion that he was nothing but a bigot. Matter of fact, if I can relate one experience, in my youth after I had gotten out of college, I was working as a toolmaker. For quite a period of time I spent weekends with a buddy of mine. Now, his mother was very—oh, almost rabidly—anti-Catholic. Out of respect to her, as my buddy's mother, I never said anything to him or to her. But I could not help judging her to be just a bigoted old woman. I wish she were alive today so that I could apologize, because now I think that I know some of the things that she knew then. I don't know if you want me to elaborate any more or not.

MM: Well, What I would like to do is to keep on some theory here, if I may for a few minutes. Because one of the things, of course, that we are charged with is being bigots. Another thing that we are charged with is that we may be trouble-makers in this sense: if we go into a courtroom and a Bible is thrust at us, and we are asked to swear to god to give testimony, I am told, "All right, if you don't like this, just don't do it, but why try to do anything about the 'practice' of having the Bible in there in the first place? This is *our* right." I am constantly confronted by people who are saying to me, "You are taking away *our* right to practice *our* religion in the way that *we* want it. So that you are trying to make the whole world Atheistic when you take, say, a Bible out of a courtroom or out of a

schoolroom." I don't know if you have been in a courtroom for any reason, Len, but just in relationship to this, what do you think of that?

Len: I could preach an hour's sermon on that. It seems to me that the First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees us freedom of religion and, at least by inference, freedom *from* religion. I don't like anything compulsory, including compulsory religion. Whether we like it or not, we have compulsory religion. I can't pick up any American money which does not tell me 'In god we trust.' While my kids were in grammar school, they had to put 'god' into the pledge of allegiance to the flag. I could not get married–well, I could have got married without –but I could not get divorced without pretending–my attorney advised me at the time that I had just better simply put my hand on the Bible and take an oath and 'not complicate things.' Of course, I was chicken enough to do it. I know one experience I had right after getting out of college. I applied for a job. The company was a large corporation in Philadelphia. In those days the application blanks still had the question of religion on them, and since I needed a job badly and it was during the heart of the depression, I thought I would play it safe and I put down 'non-sectarian.' The personnel director saw it and he said, "What's this? you *have to have some religion."* I said, "What religion do I have to have to get anywhere in this company?" He said, "Put down Protestant." I said, "O.K. Put down Protestant." It did not mean anything. I did not say which Protestant faith, but here I could not even be hired for a job, regardless of my qualifications, unless I came up to some phoney compulsory religious standard. I could not run for a public office if I did not profess some faith. I could not own a broadcast station if I did not give so much free time to people of the cloth, whoever they are. Everywhere I turn I have compulsory religion thrown at me. Religionists in this state lobby things through the state capitol–laws which are even coming into my bedroom and telling me what I can do. I think that is something that is private and personal and up to my conscience. Now, I could probably keep giving you example after example, but I think that I made the point that everywhere I turn I feel there is compulsory religion being thrust upon me. I finally decided that I was going to rebel about this and be a free American citizen.

MM: Len, I do think that that is right. Although the religious people

profess that religion is a private affair, they do move into the public arena and into politics, and into everything in relation to the public. I know that one time here in Philadelphia the street lights were decorated with an appeal for funds for a Roman Catholic fund drive and that some of the Atheists were upset in relation to that. This was a public utility and each utility pole had been used for religious advertising, whereas they could not get the same kind of use of the public utility poles for a drive for the cancer fund or something similar. Talk just a little, if you will, about living in a city which is dominated by one particular religious conviction and what the ramifications of that might be.

Len: I don't know what the statistics are for the city of Philadelphia. I live in a suburb of Philadelphia which is about 97 per cent Roman Catholic. I remember the incident you mentioned about using the utility poles. I was rather incensed, and I tried to find out where the money went. I know, for example, that there are certain agencies that simply collect funds and get a big cut out of them, and not much goes to the charity that it is intended to go to. But from what I could find out, this is from memory,–I think it is pretty nearly correct–the Catholic Charities do spend a little more of the money they collect than some of the others, but if I recall, it is about seven per cent of the take that they actually use. Now, I would like to be able to run a business on a seven per cent advertising budget.

MM: I have tried to do a study, Len, of the percentage of funds which go into various churches and whether that is given into welfare work or not, and the highest percentage that I have ever seen *claimed* by a church of the money which goes directly into welfare is about twelve per cent, and the Mormon church, of course, has possibly the best record for doing something in terms of welfare. I don't mean just giving money grants to people. I say welfare work by actually working with persons who have social problems, as well as funding them when it is necessary. I do know that it's right around seven to twelve per cent that actually goes into that kind of achievement. Yet you know that the justification for the churches is the good work that they do in the community.

Len: Well, as I said when I mentioned the seven per cent figure, I was going from memory. Your twelve per cent sounds very high to me, because it seems to me that I dug up some which were two or three per cent, and as I recall, the Roman Catho-

lics were higher than the others. You say the Mormons are higher, and I stand corrected.

MM: The point I think I was trying to make, or get your opinion regarding, was the fact that churches remain in the community because they do good work. Now, this good work is giving standards of morality. This good work is taking care of the poor and the deaf and the blind and all of this which the churches claim that they do. I think that for the most part people really do realize that the churches are not as involved as they claim to be.

Len: You brought up several points. As far as how much good they do, I don't know. I know that they do pretty well. But as far as morality, I don't know of anybody whose level of morality has been raised by going to church. I don't think that I am being biased. As a matter of fact, if I have to make a confession, when I was a kid we went to church every Sunday. While the services were going on upstairs, we were down in the gym with complete police protection, while we had a beautiful crap game going. I could tell you other things.

MM: I'd like to stay on the theory of this, rather than to get into individual cases. To get back to one of the points I was trying to make, do you feel that the religious community as a whole has a better moral and ethical standard than the Atheists you personally know?

Len: I would say, definitely and unequivocably, that the devout religionists I know are so far lower in their moral standards that I don't know how to evaluate it. I could give you example after example, including men of the cloth, and I know some of them personally. There is, for example, one—I won't mention what type man of the cloth—a friend of mine, with whom I shoot pool. It is not unusual for him to pull out a roll with a C-note a hundred dollar bill, on top. I'll say, 'What was that for?' 'Oh, I gave them a couple of extra paragraphs in the eulogy and the family liked it,' he'll say. 'Things turned out pretty good today.' Would you want any other examples?

MM: Well, I would like to—but right now we have to close this program. I do want to thank you, Len, for your participation with us this evening.

This program is sponsored, of course, by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational (would you believe it!) organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and

state, and to bring you a better understanding of the position of Atheists. We try to explore as much as we can of religious ideas. I think it is necessary to show you, in a contemporary way, what some people do think–your neighbors, your friends, ordinary people in the community–about religion.

I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Our Post Office Box is 2117, Austin, Texas. P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We sell copies of tapes of these programs. Please send a note in order to obtain information. Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 42–March 17, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

INTERVIEW WITH AN ATHEIST
"JO ANN"–Part I

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I am in Pennsylvania, as I said during the last program, and we are doing a series of interviews with some Atheists up here in the Pennsylvania community. I want to talk to a young woman tonight. Jo Ann, may I use your name?

Jo Ann: Yes, you may.

MM: Everyone is extremely curious to know what could possibly constitute an Atheist. I want to tell everybody first that you are quite attractive. You have big brown eyes, a beautiful complexion and auburn hair?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: You just look like an ordinary young woman who is walking around the streets. I want to ask you a few questions in order to give some background information to the people who have this rabid, or avid, curiosity about Atheists. How old are you, Jo Ann?

Jo Ann: Thirty two.

MM: Have you always lived in Pennsylvania?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: Are you from a family that is native Pennsylvanian, or foreign born, or what?

Jo Ann: Strictly Pennsylvania.

MM: Oh, well that is fine. Good then! We don't need to yell at you to go back to Russia like my religious friends often do, do we? Jo Ann, what grade did you complete in school, or what particular school did you complete, high school, or what?

Jo Ann: I completed twelve years of school, through high school.

MM: What are you working as right now?

Jo Ann: Right now I am a waitress.

MM: Oh, you mean if I come in and get a cup of coffee, an Atheist might be waiting on me?

Jo Ann: Definitely.

MM: Well, I am delighted to hear that. Can you tell me just a little about the family religion into which you were born?

Jo Ann: Well, they were strictly religious, but, as I've said to myself and to others, I cannot seem to find a god for myself. I was different.

MM: Different from your family?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: What brand of religion?

Jo Ann: Well, my family technically was Episcopalian, which is quite close to being Catholic.

MM: Yes, I understand that. What did you do in searching for a religion? Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Jo Ann: Well, my parents were very liberal in my having friends. I have friends of all types of religion it seems. I used to go to church with them, but I could not find any god in any of the churches—none of them, nor in any religion. I experimented with different religions.

MM: You actually attended the churches? Did you join any of them?

Jo Ann: Well, I was a Catholic at one time and I almost got—became, an Eastern Star until my aunt intervened with that and explained to me, logically you know, "They don't want you."

MM: Why? Why wouldn't they want you?

Jo Ann: Well, a girl friend's mother was an official of the Eastern Stars here, here in Philadelphia, and she wanted to sponsor me, you know, pay for my going into it and all. Then I happened to mention to my aunt, "Oh, I am going to join the Eastern Star," and she almost had a hemorrhage.

MM: Can you tell the persons who are listening in—because you know that this radio program is broadcast in different parts of the United States—what an Eastern Star is? When the Baptist-dominated Texans, or the Mormon-dominated Utah people hear it, they don't know, some of them.

Jo Ann: Why I believe that the Eastern Star is connected with the Methodists. And the Catholic Church tells you you should not belong to any secret organization—but the Knights of Columbus is something different, because they run that. [Editor's Note: The Eastern Star, the "female" masons, are

fundamentally Protestant. Perhaps this particular chapter was primarily Methodist.]

MM: Well, let me ask you about this god for which you were searching. Did you feel some sort of a need particularly that you had to relate yourself to god? Or what did you have in mind as being a god?

Jo Ann: Well, different people would pray to a god, and it seemed like everybody else had a—I just felt a need, like maybe I was lacking something and that I should have a god; but I could not find him.

MM: Did you ever pray?

Jo Ann: Yes, I prayed.

MM: Did you ever feel any specific relief from your prayer, or did anybody ever answer you, or did you see anything at all which would indicated that prayer was efficacious, or effected something?

Jo Ann: No, I never felt any differently, better or worse, you know. I never got anything from praying.

MM: Did you ever talk over prayer with anybody else? And see if they accomplished anything by praying?

Jo Ann: Yes, and the answer I always got was, "God answers all prayers."

MM: For the people to whom you talked? But he did not answer yours?

Jo Ann: No, never answered. He never answered them. I don't think he liked me.

MM: Perhaps you did not have the proper channel of communication up there to him, at all. Well, tell me, when did you first conceive of the idea of saying, "Oh well, I am not going to look any further for god."?

Jo Ann: Well, this might surprise a lot of people, but I think I was in the fourth grade of school and I came to the conclusion that for me there would never be any so-called god.

MM: But you kept on looking, didn't you?

Jo Ann: I kept trying to look.

MM: Are you looking for this now? Or are you trying to find any answers concerned with this at the present time?

Jo Ann: No, I stopped looking because I really know to myself—for myself and all—that there is no god. And I don't try to pretend that there is by searching for him.

MM: Well, now let's suppose that—right now, currently, you are not married, is that right? Now, supposing you would

meet a man and you would fall in love with him, and this man was very religious. Have you ever had this happen to you?

Jo Ann: I have thought this over and I don't believe in religion, and I am afraid that I would force myself to give up the idea, because I can't let anyone push religion on me now. Because I want nothing to do with it.

MM: Well, do you think this–that you would discuss this with anyone whom you might propose to be married to? How would you handle a situation like that? Here you are, a young woman, and young people are just–really they 'kind of' have an eye out for a mate somewhere along the line. Supposing the one that you had your eye on was religious?

Jo Ann: This I would like to find out before I got too serious about anyone.

MM: Let's let it go at that, because I think that it is hard to speculate on what–

Jo Ann: But you have to, in a sense.

MM: I guess that is true too. Tell me if you have any feeling in regard to what you think you should have been taught, or what children should be taught generally, in regard to religion, starting with the idea of Sunday school. Did you go to Sunday school? Do you think that children should be sent to Sunday school?

Jo Ann: I went to Sunday school, but I don't think they should be sent to Sunday school.

MM: Why not?

Jo Ann: Because there it can confuse them by giving them so much odd stuff in their minds.

MM: What do you mean, "odd stuff?"

Jo Ann: Well, your Bible, for instance. I think that on a newsstand it would be called pornographic literature.

MM: Some of the books of the Bible *are* fairly risque. I think we can agree on that–but what would you substitute for children in order to give them the so-called morals that they need?

Jo Ann: To let them read something similar to Thomas Paine's writings. There has to be some other reading that they can do other than religious reading.

MM: While I was on a television program in Pennsylvania this week, I was introduced to a conglomeration of material called "religious literature" which is being introduced into

the schools here, and I am wondering if you think it would be a good idea for children in the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh or even eighth grades to be instructed in the Christian religion.

Jo Ann: If they can be instructed in the Atheist field at the same time, I would.

MM: I am glad I asked that question! Let me ask you this. You had various teachers along the line. Do you think that a teacher can present religious material without giving his or her own viewpoint?

Jo Ann: Yes, they can. Because I had several teachers that were of different religious faiths and if I liked the teacher very well I would try, more or less, to be like her. You know, you try to find out all you can like the way she wears her hair and how she talks; even her religious beliefs.

MM: Oh, were you influenced, do you think, with something like this–a teacher–in respect to religion somewhere along the line?

Jo Ann: Yes, I had a very attractive teacher in about the fourth grade which I mentioned before.

MM: Yes?

Jo Ann: And she never said anything, but I believe that she was an Atheist.

MM: You had Bible and Prayer classes up here in Pennsylvania in the public schools. Do you remember that?

Jo Ann: Yes I do, and I disliked it very much. My last name begins with a Z and I always was put up front, and it seems as if the teachers were near-sighted and that it was always the first row they called on to make read the Bible.

MM: Oh, then you read the Bible a lot?

Jo Ann: Yes, and some of those words really stumped me.

MM: Can you tell me whether or not you feel that the prayer in the public schools in which *you* participated made you feel nearer to god during that time when you were praying, or did you feel more sacred, or more holy, or that you were in a religious ceremony of any kind? How did you feel those few moments every morning?

Jo Ann: Well, personally, I would rather have had it be a study period before starting the day. Because I know a lot of the other kids would be doing–catching up on–the homework that they should have done at home. When someone would be reading the Bible, you know, it could have been used

for better things like a study period.

MM: Well, let's go into something else right now at this time. Do you consider yourself to be an Atheist?

Jo Ann: Yes I do, because I don't believe in god at all.

MM: Do you believe that there is any kind of a hereafter?

Jo Ann: No.

MM: Do you believe in angels, or devils, or any of those sorts of things? You were once a part of the Roman Catholic Church and they put great emphasis on this, don't they?

Jo Ann: Yes they do, but I don't believe it.

MM: What about the concept of the Virgin Mary that is quite involved in this. You were talking about being influenced by a young teacher. Do you think that during the time you were a Roman Catholic you were influenced by the idea of the Virgin Mary?

Jo Ann: No, I could never really grasp that story completely. But then I thought, well maybe this god made an exception. But she never really influenced me much because she was so holy.

MM: Well, I guess that is true. Is it–ah–I think one of the things perhaps–let me question you about it. I don't want to ask you a leading question, but at the same time I do want to try to find out something from you. Are biblical figures too good, so that you can't understand them?

Jo Ann: No, not that way. No. It is just that Samson killed a lot of men with a–wild stories! Like an ocean pouring and–

MM: You could not accept these wild stories either?

Jo Ann: No, because in school they teach you, you know, the scientific facts of things, which make a lot more sense than that this person is swallowed by a whale and those kinds of things.

MM: Let me ask you, are you pretty happy now since you have just rejected the concepts of religion, and does this include organized religion, or also ideas about religion? Do you separate these two things? How do you feel? Happy? Unhappy? Relieved? Have you stopped searching? Just tell me a little bit right there.

Jo Ann: Well, first of all, I am very happy. I really am, because I don't have to pretend that I believe in the hereafter and different religious rituals and giving them money and stuff that they want you to do. I can be more honest about a lot of things. I seem to get along with other people better. I

am quite happy.

MM: I am delighted to hear that.

This has been an interview with a young woman who lives and works in Pennsylvania, who is an Atheist, who is about thirty two years of age now, and a high school graduate. This is just about how she feels. Thank you very much, Jo Ann.

This program is sponsored by the Society of Separationists, and we do try to explore the opinions and feelings of persons and try to bring you an understanding of what persons who are Atheists are like. We do accept contributions, gifts, in order to sustain this and other radio programs in other states of the United States. Our sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization. You may reach us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Till then, it is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you so much for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 43–March 24, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

INTERVIEW WITH AN ATHEIST
"JO ANN"–Part II

Good evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I am still visiting in Philadelphia, and I have chosen one of the Atheists here to talk to a second time, because I hope to make a point and demonstrate to our listeners that everybody in America is largely illiterate about religion and the Bible. Even those persons who think they are Atheists, really sometimes know very little about what they are criticizing or what they are trying to achieve.

I want to demonstrate that there tonight. Now I have chosen Jo Ann again, because Jo Ann is typical of many people in the United States. She has finished high school, which many of us have, and she has not furthered her *formal* education along that line, although she has been doing reading and trying to instruct herself. Now I have here some things about the Bible that I want to talk to you about, Jo Ann, and get your reaction, if I may. O.K., Jo Ann?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: Do you know that the Bible is one of twenty seven books for which divine origin is claimed?

Jo Ann: No, I never knew that.

MM: Do you know that every single one of the other twenty seven books claim to have been written by the finger of god, or in god's words directly? Did you know this?

Jo Ann: I have heard something similar to that. I never read any of them.

MM: What do you think about that?

Jo Ann: I believe it is impossible.

MM: What do you, then, think about our Bible, because Christians deny that any of these other bibles were written by god, and all of the people [who believe] in the other bibles deny that out Christian Bible was written by god. Who do you think is right?

Jo Ann: I don't believe any of them, I guess.
MM: Do you know that there was an accumulation of 2,500 Jewish-Christian writings, and do you know how many books there are in our Bible formed out of these 2,500?
Jo Ann: No.
MM: Only sixty six. What do you think about that?
Jo Ann: What about the Dead Sea Scrolls? Are they included?
MM: No, they are not, as a matter of fact. But the Christian Bible consisted, for over a hundred and fifty years, of the sacred books of the Jews. The New Testament was not formed until the last half of the second century. Did you know that?
Jo Ann: No, I did not.
MM: When did you think that the New Testament was written?
Jo Ann: Isn't that the King James?
MM: That is one version of it. But the New Testament consists of the stories about the life of Jesus Christ. When did you think they were written?
Jo Ann: I don't really recall, because I don't pay that much attention to the Bible itself.
MM: Actually they were written about the latter part of the second century by a man by the name of Arenius who selected twenty books from among forty or more 'gospels,' and I don't know why these particular ones were chosen. I don't know why, out of twenty, only four of them were considered to be 'gospels.' Could you have any idea about why this might be?
Jo Ann: No, but aren't there certain exotic, like, religions–like the "hidden books" or the books of the Bible that were never revealed to others?
MM: Oh yes, there is much trade on those. I will get to them in a few moments. But why do you suppose they used four? Isn't our magic number three, or thirteen or something like that?
Jo Ann: The bad luck number is thirteen!
MM: Let me tell you what Arenius said about this. He said, "There are four corners of the earth in which we live. There are four universal winds, north, east, south and west, so we should have four Gospels." How about that for choosing four gospels for the Bible?
Jo Ann: He liked the number four.
MM: The Bible did not assume anything like its present form

until about the fourth century. Did you know that?

Jo Ann: No.

MM: The Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic and the Protestant Bibles were not even adopted until very modern times, did you know that?

Jo Ann: No, but don't the Catholics have their own Bible, different from the Protestant?

MM: Yes they do. They have what is called the Douay version of the Bible. Actually, the Council of Trent in the year 1565 determined the Roman Catholic Canon and that consisted of seventy two books. Did you know that?

Jo Ann: No!

MM: Well, you were a Catholic at one time. Did they not tell you where their Bible came from?

Jo Ann: No, they never mentioned that at all.

MM: Where did you suppose the Bible came from?

Jo Ann: Well, I asked that question in instructions and I was told something about the Pope handing it out.

MM: Did you know that the Greek Catholics had a council of Jerusalem in the year 1672 and that they finally settled the last "problem" about the book of *Revelations* in 1672? Did you suppose that this had come from the time of Jesus Christ, or what?

Jo Ann: No, it couldn't have.

MM: Do you know that the Westminster Assembly in England in 1647 approved the list of sixty six books which are contained in what is called the "Authorized Version?" What do you think that "authorized" means?

Jo Ann: Oh, they probably have a different definition. I am so used to the Catholic Church side, I am sure that "authorized" comes from the Pope.

MM: Why I guess that is true in modern times. Did you know that the Pope—the papacy—was once split up, and part of it went to France and the other part remained in Italy? Did you know this?

Jo Ann: Yes, but the Catholic Church does not mention it to anyone. That is one period of time that they do not talk about. You can not even get them to discuss it!

MM: Do you know who named the Bible?

Jo Ann: No.

MM: Well, it was a Christian savant by the name of Chrysostom, and he rejected six of the sixty six books of the Bible that

we have. And he said that *Esther, Jonah, Hebrews, James, Jude* and *Revelations* should be thrown out of the Bible.

Jo Ann: Well, what ones did we throw out? Those are in there now.

MM: Well, actually we still have the sixty six. We did not throw out these that he asked to be thrown out at all. The Christians did not throw them out. Did you know that Calvin, who was a religious leader, wanted to throw out the book called *Revelations*? Have you ever read the book of *Revelations*? Do you remember it at all?

Jo Ann: No, not really. I have read it, but I cannot recall.

MM: Well, Thomas Jefferson said that he considered–I am quoting him now–"I consider the Book of *Revelations* to be merely the ravings of a maniac; what has no meaning admits of no explanation." So Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson, wanted to throw this out too. But what do you think about this? Do you think that the people with whom you grew up or your friends now with whom you are working –do you think that they really know any of this information about the Bible?

Jo Ann: No, they don't, and I would say that none of the people I know actually read the Bible. They go out and buy a real special bible, golden-edged and all this stuff, but they never really read it.

MM: Why do you suppose that is?

Jo Ann: I don't know. It is just something in their mind that tells them that they have to have a big Bible in the home, but it seems that you never see anybody read it, and it is always brand new looking.

MM: When you read the Bible yourself, or parts of it, did you understand exactly what you were reading?

Jo Ann: No.

MM: Did you ever try to find out more about it?

Jo Ann: No, because it seemed like it was fables, in a sense.

MM: Do you think that people really believe now that this pretty Bible they have, which they do not read, is really the word of god?

Jo Ann: I don't know, because nobody seems to talk about it.

MM: Have you questioned anybody recently about what they know about the Bible? Or do you talk to them about it to see if they really have any ideas about the meaning of it?

Jo Ann: No, because I don't discuss religion with them to begin with, because they get into a heated argument over it–

defending it.

MM: Let me ask you a couple of other questions. When you went to church, why did you go to church?

Jo Ann: Because they tell you you are supposed to.

MM: Who is "they?"

Jo Ann: Your priests. That's a matter of confession, if you don't go.

MM: Why do you suppose that people go to church now? Do you know? Do you have any understanding from the people of your association?

Jo Ann: It gives them a chance to get dressed up to go to church, and to–church makes them feel better. The climate does.

MM: If you don't know what was in the Bible, or where it came from, and you attended church for many years of your life, do you suppose that anybody else has any better insight into it than you do?

Jo Ann: I would say no.

MM: I wonder why, then, people cling to something that they know very little about, if they don't explore it; if they are just told about it. The primary thing that they have involvement with is money. They give an awful lot of money to the church.

Jo Ann: Yes, they do. But I think they also have something similar to a blind faith. If they have a fight with their family, at least they can go and talk to god. He will listen to them.

MM: And god doesn't fight back, either. Does he?

Jo Ann: No.

MM: I am just trying to explore with you a little bit about what fascination there might be to religion, or if one gets a benefit from it that you can see. Do you know if, among those persons in your association who go to church and who do not go to church, there is a difference?

Jo Ann: Well, I can say that those who do not go are a lot happier.

MM: Elaborate on that a little bit.

Jo Ann: Well, they don't have to pretend. Like it's Sunday, we'll have to go to church, you know. If you feel like sleeping in the morning on Sunday, you sleep. They seem to feel that they are martyrs by getting up and going to church.

MM: It's painful! What about the children of your acquaintances? Do people stay at home themselves and send their children? How does that work out here, with the people whom you know?

Jo Ann: Well, they don't go themselves, but they—you know—send the children.

MM: Have they ever said anything about why, in casual conversation?

Jo Ann: No, they don't discuss religion.

MM: But yet, when you try to discuss religion with anybody you find that somehow or other people blow up about it?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: Can you tell me any reasons that you might have thought about concerning this?

Jo Ann: Well, I was at my girl friend's home and her daughter is in the first grade. You know, the girl was showing me her school books. She goes to parochial school. And it had—they were not spelling the words the way they should be—like mother would not be spelled m-O-t-h-e-r, it would be spelled m-U-t-h-e-r. Well, looking at the book, I though, this is a school book? She was reading it to me and I was a sentence or two behind her trying to read it with her. I happened to mention it to her mother and she said, "Oh, that's the new style of reading." I said, "Yes, but when the child starts to spell, she is going to be reading one word, the written one, but she will have to spell it another way." And she said, "Well, that is how the church wants it."

MM: Mother—m-U-t-h-e-r? Because it sounds like that; Phonetics—

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: Then . . .

Jo Ann: It is phonics. I know that they did not have it when I went to school.

MM: I did not know that church schools were experimenting with that right now.

Jo Ann: Yes they are. That was in Philadelphia.

MM: Well, would you believe that we have been talking for fifteen minutes already?

Jo Ann: No, not really!

MM: It really goes by, doesn't it? The time? I want to thank you very much for continuing your conversation with me, and I hope that I will have time while I am up here to do a couple more tapes. I will put them on a little but later in my radio series. Do I have your permission for that?

Jo Ann: Yes.

MM: Thank you very much.

Jo Ann: You're welcome.

This program is brought to you by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the separation of church and state. I have been talking this evening to another one of the Atheists of the Philadelphia group, in Pennsylvania, and you may have a copy of this program for—if you will send us—a half dollar for it.

We depend upon your donations in order to keep our radio program going and the place to send them is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. That is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will be with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Until then, I do thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 44—March 31, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

INTERVIEW WITH AN ATHEIST
"BILL"

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

This evening I would like to interview a young man and introduce him to you.

MM: Your name is Bill?
Bill: That's right.
MM: How old are you, Bill?
Bill: Twenty three.
MM: You have a partial university background, is that right?
Bill: That's correct.
MM: Which university is that?
Bill: The University of Hawaii.
MM: I would like to question you, if I could tonight, please. I have done a series of interviews with Atheists, and I am very interested in knowing about your religious convictions. Could you possibly categorize yourself? Or would you care to do this?
Bill: I would categorize myself as an Atheist, but being an Atheist, I prefer not to have any category. But if we have to have stereotypes, it would be as an Atheist.
MM: Can you tell me, more or less, what you think an American Atheist is, or ought to be? If you can, and in broad general terms.
Bill: An American Atheist? Well, first of all, an American Atheist has an unusual place in the overall world society because he is an American and lives in a democratic state, and thus is more able to profess his beliefs, probably more than anywhere else. And to be an Atheist in this country is to be a person who is critically interested in his fellow human beings, his advancement of himself and thereby, the advancement of the entire society.
MM: All right. I think I can accept that. Do you see in the society

whether or not theology and theistic beliefs are attempting to alleviate the social inequalities at all? Do you see them in the foreground a bit, or do you think that they ought to be in the foreground, or confine their discussion and organizational work to the religious idea of getting to heaven only?

Bill: First we have to realize that religion, and especially organized religion, is a crutch to the individual, and this enables the individual to excuse himself from being a man and being a part of the human race. The individual who does believe in god and prays to god asks for forgiveness, and gives god credit for everything he does, is not to the fullest extent a man. Religion, as it is organized, of course, is a group of certain individuals who are aware of the weaknesses in other people and who take financial advantage of them, as well as certain psychological advantage of them, in order to make them do their bidding. Now, if we go into this a little further, we see that religion has to be a backward–basically a backward thing which, because of its controlling nature, must keep individuals where they are–must keep them static in order to keep them in a position where they do not think that they are even men, and where they will not go out and attempt to improve themselves or their society, but will just be static and support organized religion with those psychological and financial advantages. Therefore, we find in civil rights and politically that the church, which is always in the background, always supports the status quo rather than moving forward to create–ah well, we shan't say "liberal", but rather to create more–ah, how would you put this–more, well, just more creative.

MM: What kind of background would you say that you come from, that you have accepted the overall philosophy of life–Atheist thinking–which is intervention into the human community apparently, from your definition here, in order to improve the condition of human beings and therefore of yourself, I suppose, in living.

Bill: First we have to realize that an Atheist does not accept. An Atheist critically examines a situation and then does what he feels is right. So, I do not feel that I have accepted anything. I feel that I have come to an intellectual decision as to what my ideas are as to working in the society, and what I should do. I think that with myself, as with any Atheist, these things are completely individualistic and do not reflect acceptable or non-acceptable "anything," really.

MM: Can you tell me a little bit about the community in which you live? And I am speaking of the age community–your friends. Can you speak a little about what their confrontation with living is, in terms of living in America in the university background?

Bill: This is a little funny, to be frank. I mean the university background is–of course, I have a lot of work experience also in the business world, in the airline industry, in traffic control, et cetera, and I find, particularly in my age group, that persons are no longer seriously concerned with religion. They may give token attendance to a church because their parents believe in this and because they do not want to hurt their parents' feelings. But, at the most, if not, I should say, the over--if the overwhelming majority of the persons in my age category are not Atheists–I am talking about the people in the middle class who go out and work every day–if they are not Atheists, then at the least they are Agnostics. I think the reason for this is simple, because in our scientific society it is no longer by going out and praying that you can hit the deer with the arrow (because the arrow is an inaccurate weapon) as in the primitive societies, but now we have a technical, complex, society. Everybody is aware of the skills which they must learn. Everyone is aware of the skills which they must use. They are aware of their own abilities and they are aware of how little of god there is in a computer, how little of god there is in the engine of a Boeing 707, how little of god there is in any of the technical instruments that we use today. They are becoming more and more aware of mankind, and that this is all the product of mankind. This is man's creative ability. This is man's genius. This is man's handiwork. And, as long as this is man–and I am a man–then, this is what we are. There is no room in it for god. There is no room in it for any god.

MM: Did you come to your Atheism because you were indoctrinated into this? Did you come from an Atheist background? Can you tell me very briefly how you have arrived at this? What kind of religious background did you have?

Bill: I came from a very–a family–which we shall say was "mixed" as far as religious beliefs are concerned. I had in my immediate family environment a Presbyterian, and a Lutheran and an Atheist. I was exposed not only to Atheism and to Protestantism, but also in many aspects to Judaism, because for two years I did attend a private school which was ninety per cent Jewish. I found it imperative, in order to function in that type of

scholastic society, to be more aware of Judaism and what the beliefs of the Jews were. So I feel that I was, in my family environment and in my scholastic environment in early years, completely exposed to all religions. I think that this gave me a much broader interpretation of the conflicting beliefs and dogmas of the religions and made me completely aware that the only answer was man himself.

MM: What is the belief of your wife? Would you care to discuss it with us?

Bill: She is an Atheist. I think that she would believe just about the same way that I would. However, this is ony thing that we have never truly discussed because I think that this is about–I think that this is something–which the individual must decide himself, whether he wants to function in society, or whether he wants to function in a sort of mystical realm of fantasy.

MM: Was your wife an Atheist before she met you?

Bill: Yes, she was.

MM: Do you know . . .

Bill: As I said before, there are not that many people in my age group that you are going to run into who believe in god. Really it would be a little difficult for me to find a wife who believed in god.

MM: Tell me, if you can, any kind of particular evaluation which you have of those persons of your age group who continue to cling to this and who do continue to attempt to order their lives in relationship to the god, or theistic, concept.

Bill: I think that, if we want to go on a class-structured basis, which we do have to in this country, to a certain extent, despite the expanding middle class, you will find most of the persons who are true believers in god are in your lower classes, the persons who are poor, who have less education, who have less chance for advancement. I think that this is basically where you find it. It has become a "class thing" and as the lower classes shrink in our country, and the middle class expands, you find less and less religion. The only religion you find in the middle class is the hypocrisy-filled type, and other persons who believe in god only on Sunday and make jokes about it the other six days of the week.

MM: All right. Can you tell me a little bit about your future? You have just–you are now entering the military, aren't you?

Bill: That is correct. I am entering the military service.

MM: You know that there are tremendous social forces which are

coercive against persons of non-belief and that some of this occurs in the military as well as any place else. For instance, at Annapolis, one is required to attend chapel, whether one believes or accepts this or not. In the San Diego Naval Training Base, the cadets are marched into church every single Sunday whether they accept it or not. We have many complaints from naval persons of forced religious observations. We also have this in civilian life, of course, for we continue to have this on our postage, in our courtrooms, and in some public schools in Texas. Did you know that? They continue to have Bible reading and prayer recitation. What do you feel about this enforced observance of religion which is fortified by the strength of the government behind it?

Bill: Well, it's–it just shows the hypocrisy of religion. Here we have something and we have a small minority forcing a large majority, who just do not believe in it, to do it. As a matter of fact, it makes it better for us. They want to force people to say this–there're going to be more and more–they're going to laugh at it. It is going to be a joke. They are going to–the more they force people to recite prayers, the more they force people to enter a chapel, the more of a joke the whole idea of religion is going to be for the masses.

MM: So you feel that coercion has the opposite effect on a person?

Bill: I definitely do. I think that this kind of coercion does nothing more than to strengthen the Atheist position in our society, and does nothing more than prove that religion has nothing to offer. For if it had something valid to offer, they would not have to force anyone to accept it.

MM: Well, I think that is true. That is a good answer. I think that perhaps we should identify you for our listening audience in the last moment here. You are visiting here in Austin, Texas, this week, aren't you?

Bill: That is correct.

MM: And, you are visiting my home, I am happy to say. Will you please tell these people who you are.

Bill: My name is William J. Murray III.

MM: That's right. How are you related to me, Bill?

Bill: You are my mother.

MM: I am very pleased to have had you with me tonight and to have had the opportunity to interview you. How do you like Austin?

Bill: Well, I think that is is a very, very fine community. I think the people are friendly.

MM: Thank you very much. It is a pleasure to have you, Bill, with me for those few days before you go into the army.

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Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 45—April 7, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE CHRISTIANITY OF OUR FOUNDING AS A NATION

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

We hear constantly that the United States is a Christian nation and that it was founded on the principle of Christianity. Of course, historically this is just not true. The "founders" of our nation were so fed up with Christianity that they repudiated it over and over again. Why were they fed up?

Let me read you a little about the tolerant Christians who founded our first states while we were still tied to England as our mother nation, and see if you don't immediately perceive why our "founding fathers" wanted no part of this intolerance and hypocrisy. Let us look at the laws of the lord and the laws of the land, state by state, in those colonial times.

We can begin with that great mother state, Virginia, and cite for you the "Lawes Divine, Moral and Martial" decreed by Governor Thomas Dale in that state in 1612. Here we go!

First: To speak impiously of the Trinity or one of the Divine Persons, or against the known articles of the Christian faith was punishable by death.

I will pause in order for that to sink in. This means that a Unitarian, as we know them now, or a Jew, or a Buddhist, or a Moslem, could be punished with death for professing those faiths in Virginia. But let me go on and finish this series of laws.

Two: To avenge blaspheming god's holy name, the punishment was death.

Three: To curse or "banne"; for the first offense some severe punishment in relation to local customs; for the second, a "bodkin" (this is a knife) "should be thrust through the tongue"; if the culprit offended the third time by swearing, this was punishable by death.

Four: To say or do anything "to the derision or despight of god's holy word," or to say or do anything in disrespect to any minister,

the guilty party was "openly whipt three times, and to ask public forgiveness in the assembly of the congregation, three several Sabath daies [sic]."

Five: Non-attendance at church or religious services entailed a penalty for the first offense, the stoppage of allowance; for the second offense, a whipping; for the third, the galleys (i.e. jail) for six months.

Six: If anyone broke the Sabbath, and we have remnants of this in our present "Blue Laws," the first offense brought the stoppage of allowance; the second, whipping; and the third—death!

These boys did not play!

Seven: Every person in the colony, or every person who came into it, was required to repair to the minister of the church for examination in the faith. If his religious education was unsound, he was to be instructed. If he refused to go to the minister for this examination, he was to be "whipt." If he refused a second time, he "should be whipt twice and compelled to acknowledge his fault on Sabath day in the assembly of the congregation," and if he refused a third time, for that third refusal he was to be "whipt every day until he makes his acknowledgement."

Fines were imposed for non-attendance at church. Payment of tithes (this is ten per cent of one's income and is equivalent to the surtax we now have on our incomes) was made compulsory for all, and a first lien was put on every resident's tobacco to make certain that he paid his tithe. All parish churches were built by local taxation. Puritan clergy were banished from the state or forced to attend Anglican services. Quakers were fined, imprisoned or banished. Catholics were disqualified from public office and any priest who dared to come to Virginia was subject to instant expulsion from the state. Anyone who did not present an infant child for baptism was penalized by a fine or other penalty.

How does all that grab you? We are only beginning. Now, let's look at the great state of New York. In this state all residents were compelled, under penalty of arrest and imprisonment, to contribute to the support of the church and the minister! All laws required the baptism of all children and they could be baptised only by a Reformed minister in a Reformed church!

In 1653 the Lutherans petitioned the state for liberty of worship and permission to import a Lutheran minister, and the petition was rebuffed. Some Lutherans were so ill-advised as to persist in holding services in their homes and were thrown into prisons for this. Baptists who were secretly holding religious services in their homes were

arrested, fined, whipped and banished when they were caught. Quakers were especially disliked and were designated as "instruments of Satan," subject to immediate expulsion from the colony. As a matter of fact, any ship that brought any one of them into the harbor could be confiscated, and the penalty for harboring a Quaker for one single night was fifty pounds. One Quaker was sentenced to two years hard labor for the crime of preaching.

All this was changed in 1664 when the Duke of York came into power, for he presented "Instructions" to the colony and these contained such rare orders as providing for the erection of a church building in every parish, with the cost for it, as well as the support of the minister of the parish, raised by a public tax. Finally, in 1683, this state really got "religious liberty" for at that time the "Charter of Liberties" was adopted by the assembly of the colony and this decreed that: "No person professing faith in God by Jesus Christ is to be molested or called in question for any difference of opinion in matters of religion (and that the churches already in New York do appear to be privileged Churches)."

In Maryland came probably the most famous of all the so-called "Acts" which gave "religious freedom." This is the Act of Toleration passed in 1649 and hailed everywhere as a right to freedom of religion. So, like nasty culprits, as Atheists are designated, let us take a peek tonight at this famous charter of religious "liberty." The statute itself was entitled "An Act çoncerning Religion," and it had four principal provisions. The first three were really denials rather than grants of religious liberty, for the first section imposed *the penalty of death and forfeiture of estate* on any person who "shall henceforth blaspheme God, that is curse Him, or deny our Saviour Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, or the Godhead of any of the said three persons of the Trinity or the unity of the Godhead, or shall use or utter any reproachful speeches, words or language concerning the Holy Trinity, or any of the three persons therein." Utterance of "reproachful words and speeches" concerning the Virgin Mary or the "holy apostles or evangelists" was punishable only, merely, by fine, whipping, imprisonment and banishment.

The second section imposed fines, whipping and imprisonment on any person who called another person "an heretic, schismatic, idolator, Puritan, Independent, Presbyterian, papish priest, Jesuit, Jesuited papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Brownist, Antinomian, Barrowist, Roundhead, Separatist, or any other name or term in a reproachful manner relating to matter of religion."

The third section imposed fines or imprisonment for profaning the lord's day. The fourth section, which is the famous one said to be the first real law for freedom of religion, reads like this, and I am reading the law itself here.

"And whereas the enforcing of the conscience in matters of religion has frequently fallen out to be of dangerous consequences in those commonwealths where it has been practiced, and for the more quiet and peaceable government of this province and the better to preserve mutual love and unity among inhabitants, no person or persons whatsoever within this province . . . professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall henceforth be in any ways troubled, molested or discountenanced for or in respect of his or her religion nor in the free exercise thereof, nor in any way compelled to the belief or exercise thereof, nor in any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion against his or her consent."

What happened to Jews or Atheists under such a rule? You all know. You know it instinctively. Yet this was so liberal that when Maryland was taken away from the Baltimores, the Act was repealed. In 1658 the province was restored to Lord Baltimore and the Act was again put in force.

We can go on unendingly. In Rhode Island a law was enacted that limited citizenship and eligibility to public office to Protestants. In 1762 the Superior Court of Rhode Island refused the application of two Jews for citizenship in that state. In Pennsylvania, under the "Great Law" enacted in 1682, persons had to "acknowledge one God" in order to live "peacable and justly under the civil government", but profanity was penalized, Sunday observance was required and the idea of "looseness, irreligion and Atheism" was not to be permitted "under pretence of Conscience." Political privileges were limited to Christians and this did not encompass either Catholics or Jews.

In 1700 New York enacted a law under which anyone practicing Catholic religion "shall be deemed and accounted an incendiary and disturber of the public peace and safety and an enemy of the true Christian religion and shall be adjudged to suffer perpetual banishment." In 1704 Maryland forbade Roman Catholic priests to baptize children; in 1716 that state imposed severe penalties on public officials who participated in the mass after taking an oath of office.

In Virginia, as late as 1776, denial of the trinity was punishable by imprisonment for three years. Baptists, between 1768 and 1774, were whipped, beaten, arrested, fined and imprisoned for existing in Virginia during that period. Remember that 1776 is not even two

hundred years ago.

When the Constitution of our nation was being hammered out, the framers of that work were quite aware of the laws in each state. Remember that they had to fight for the First Amendment to the Constitution and that it was not ratified by all the states until 1791. This is only one hundred and seventy eight years ago.

Your history books do not explicitly set forth in detail the extraordinary laws which religions of every stripe put forth in the colonial period. They are, and they ought to be, ashamed to do so. In that period so many hundreds of persons suffered injustly by these laws that Christianity was stigmatized and rejected by our nation's leaders. Deism was the intellectuals' position in that day and age and deism was the concept that there really only existed "Nature and Nature's God," identified in that way in the Declaration of Independence," which was not alone a declaration of independence from England, but also of our independence from these restrictive Christian ideas.

Yet I have barely touched upon these laws and we can elaborate on them later, for that is all the time there is tonight.

My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete and absolute separation of church and state.

I shall be back with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Tonight I would like to feature for you our latest book titled *Promised Land*, which is an analysis of the situation in Israel as seen from the viewpoint of persons who have no religion and who therefore can investigate objectively the claims of persons of various religious faiths to specific land areas. The price is $1.50 and you can have it by sending that amount to P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. I will repeat that address for you–The Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening and a very good night to you.

Program 46–April 14, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

EARLY BIBLE SCHOLARSHIP

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I have been doing my best in the last months to find out something about the Bible. I wanted to do this to present it in these broadcasts, but every religious authority has a different tale to tell, and so does every Atheist authority. One would think that they were all talking about entirely different religions.

Let me give you some idea. Joseph McCabe was a Roman Catholic priest who turned Atheist and then attacked the church vigorously. He lived in England during the latter part of the last century and many Atheists swear by what he has to say in respect to research in religion. His ideas have several themes. For instance, he believes that every single great religious leader was in truth an Atheist who was warning people about "organized religions" in their day. He sees Buddha as an Atheist who cautioned folks to keep clear of priests, temples and idle speculations about a future life. He claims that Confucianism never was a religion and that it has consistently preserved the Atheism and high moral code of its founder. Taoism, which he feels is the second religion of China, pretends to have been founded by Lao-Tse, a contemporary of Confucius, who, though inclined to mysticism equally warned his followers against organized religion with its ceremonies and devil-dodging. He feels that what is called broadly Zoroastrianism in Persia, taking its name from the prophet Zoroaster or Zarathustra, is merely one where the founder of the faith set out to purify religion by stripping it of all that now the modern Zoroastrians call religion. He thinks that Mohammed was a rebel against all organized and priestly religions and that the rebel against organized religion *par excellence* was Jesus Christ, who most probably was an Atheist also.

I can't quite accept Jesus Christ as an Atheist, any more than I can accept Mohammed as one. I feel that the truth of the matter is that they were highly critical of the religion of the day and were attempting to improve on it or redirect it, nothing else.

We have another obscure Atheist writer who has another theory, and without giving any references at all, states the following:

"The genuine Pauline Epistles, in the New Testament, are *Romans, I* and *II Corinthians* and *Galatians.* The other letters attributed

to St. Paul are generally regarded as spurious. The genuine Epistles were written from about 52 to 64 A.C. [This is his designation of time and he uses this as meaning "after Christ." I don't know if it means after Christ was born, or after Christ died.] The dates of origin of the Four Gospels have been estimated as follows: *Mark*, 70 to 100 A.C.; *Luke*, about 100 A.C.; *Matthew*, 100 to 110 A.C.; *John*, sometime between 100 and 160 A.C."

I can't accept scholarship, so-called, even from an Atheist, which is so sloppy as that. He does not attempt any identification or veracity for Paul, or Saul, and does not designate what/how/who about these four important so-called Gospels.

I look further and I come to Homer Smith, who was a professor of physiology at the New York University College of Medicine. He writes without footnotes too. He claims that no copy of any Hebrew text, or any part of the Old Testament, is known that can be dated with any certainty earlier than the tenth century, and that the copy of the Prophetic Books now in the Leningrad Museum bearing the date of the year 916 has long been accepted as the oldest surviving fragment of primary Hebrew record.

He reiterates that the first translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek had been the Septuagint. It was called this because it was prepared from various Hebrew papyri by a number of translators, traditionally seventy, in the third century B.C. Septuagint means "seventy" and has to do with the number of Greek scholars involved in this effort.

No one knows where or why or when, about the Bible apparently. We have the legend that in the fourth century Jerome collected numerous Hebrew manuscripts, some figures say about fifteen hundred of them, but often the number is magical, as sixty six or seven hundred seventy seven. But in any event, this Jerome, or Saint Jerome as he is sometimes called, is supposed to have collected all the Hebrew manuscripts, edited them, translated them and put them into one Bible called the Vulgate text. This Vulgate is still used by the Roman Catholic Church, but the oldest extant fragment of this dates from either the sixth or ninth century. Oh, come on now! That is a three hundred year span. I would like to see some more accuracy than that.

But let's get back to this Septuagint, which I just mentioned above. Now it is either true or not true that the oldest extensive manuscript of the Septuagint in any language consists of 235 leaves of the Greek Codex Sinaiticus, which dates from the fourth century, and was discovered by a man named Tischendorf in the monastery

of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai in either 1844 and/or 1859 or sometime in between. Now what the 235 leaves of the Greek Codex Sinaiticus are is anyone's guess. There should be a listing of what this contains, which books of the Bible, which chapters, which verses, written in which original language and so on. It should all be sharply and clearly defined for all Bible scholars, but it is now not so clearly designated. No one has declared these to be what, or why.

Apparently there is something also called the Codex Vaticanus, presumably in Greek, although surely Jesus Christ was supposed to be Jewish and spoke either the Hebrew or Aramaic tongue. This has been preserved in the Vatican library since 1481, but no one knows exactly what is preserved, or if the real and actual date was 1481 or not. This is supposed to be a nearly complete copy of the Old and New Testaments, whatever they were, since no one knows what was considered to be either, from about the fourth century.

Then there either exists or does not exist something called the Greek Codex Alexandrinus, which is supposed to be the same as the Codex Vaticanus, "a nearly complete copy of the Old and New Testaments dating from the fifth century," maybe. This was supposed to have been preserved at Constantinople until 1627 when it was presented to Charles I of England.

Then there are the Chester Beatty Papyri which are supposed to be remnants of twelve manuscripts. What twelve manuscripts is anyone's guess, and these were allegedly found by natives, buried in one (or more?) jars in a Coptic graveyard in Egypt. Perhaps they have two substantial portions of *Genesis*, but which portions are not mentioned generally, and small fragments of *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial, Daniel, Esther* and *Ecclestiastes.* Maybe.

From all of this I only divine that god was very careless in preserving what he had written himself, or had written by saints and men who derived their authority directly from him. I am more careful to preserve my social security number than god was to preserve the writings by his own finger throughout the history of man.

For instance, it is said that a fragment of *Deuteronomy* is contained on a few bits of papyrus which were used in making a mummy cartonnage case found in Egypt. When? Where? Who knows? Just by saying something like this, the good religious brethren feel we should accept this as "authenticity" for what they say.

We have many other authorities who say things like this: "It is also admitted that Joshua did not write the book that bears his name, because it refers to events that did not happen until long after his death." I want to know who admits that, and what events hap-

pened after his death, and who says so and so, and so on. Then we have references which say something like this: "No one knows, or pretends to know, the author of *Judges.* No one knows the author of *Ruth,* nor of *I* and *II Samuel.* No one knows the author of *I* and *II Kings* or *I* and *II Chronicles.*"

I sit here and view in wonder statements like the following. "The Pentateuch [these are the first five books of the Bible] is now recognized to stem from three more or less independent sources, the Uahwistic and the Elohist version which were not committed to writing before 750 B.C. and the Priests' Code which was composed as an amplification of *Deuteronomy* shortly after the return from Bablyon or anywhere from 535 to 469 B.C."

I have no idea, and really no one else does, what anyone means by the Masoretic Text. This may be a "standard Hebrew text" which was not finally established until the second century of the Christian era, at the same time that there is an insistence that the oldest Hebrew text of the Old Testament cannot be dated earlier than the tenth century. Who is kidding whom? And for what reason?

Robert Ingersoll says without equivocation that the Old Testament was printed for the first time in 1488. That's nice, but what does that mean? In the Old Testament there are references to books of equal authority as those gathered therein and the names of some of them are the books of *Jasher, Nathan, Ahijah, Iddo, Jehu* and *Sayings of the Seers.* I have tried to find these books and I cannot. One authority says that Ezra gave the Pentateuch to the Jews. When? How? Under what circumstances?

Another authority says that Nehemiah gathered up the manuscripts about the kings and prophets and this is why we now have them. Again, when, why, where, from whence? Another authority says that the books of *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth* and *Ecclesiastes* (and some others!) were either collected or written long after. What were the others? What is "long after?" Who collected them, from what source, and why?

I have on the authority of one self-professed authority of Bible lore that the first Latin Bible originated in Africa, but that no one has ever found out which Latin manual was the original, especially since one was from Egypt, one from Ethiopia, one from Armenia. Since when has Armenia been in Africa? This is Bible scholarship?

It was not until the fourteenth century that the Bible was translated into German, and not until the fifteenth century that the Bible was printed in the principal languages of Europe. Of all these Bibles there were Luther's, the Dort, King James, the Genevan, French,

Danish and Swedish. The so-called first fragment of the Bible in the Saxon language was supposed to have been written sometime in the seventh century. The first Bible was printed in England in 1538, we hope. In 1560 the first English Bible that was divided into verses was printed, we hope.

Apparently the Bible was corrected and revised under Henry VII, and again under Queen Elizabeth, and once again under King James, that one being the one all us folk over thirty five or forty were reared on in America, unless we were Catholic, in which case we used the Douay version, or unless we were Jewish, in which case we did not even acknowledge the New Testament.

This is the word of god? Oh dear!

See you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. Until then, our sponsor, the Society of Separationists says, send a dollar or two to help finance scholarship to get us out of this confusion. It is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. That is, again, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas—A-U-S-T-I-N.

Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 47—April 21, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE SECULAR PROOFS OF THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

We have, in every country, groups of Atheists, and in New Zealand they call themselves Rationalists. From there, one of them, Patrick Campbell, has written about Jesus as follows, in a way that he terms "The Mythical Jesus." I want to quote him tonight.

"The study of the Bible, known as the Higher Criticism, shows that the first five books of the Bible, *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*, allegedly written by Moses in the fifteenth century before Christ, were not written until five hundred years after Moses was supposed to have died. There is not a tittle of evidence that such a man as Moses ever lived, yet these historically worthless books are actually the literary foundation of Christianity.

The critical study of the Bible has hopelessly shattered the authority for the study of Jesus Christ no less than that for the account of Moses. The Higher Criticism has demonstrated that the Gospels were written long after the supposed time of Christ. These conflicting and false Gospel stories, concerning which nobody knows who wrote a single line, or how often they were subsequently rewritten, tell the all to recognizable pagan fable of a man or a God whose father was a Holy Ghost and whose mother was a virgin, a man who performed miracles, cast devils out of fellow beings, and even raised the dead. Cleverer by far than the brilliant medical scientists of this modern age, this man restored sight to the blind, and, with a mere touch of his hand, cured leprosy, known to the Jews as 'scourge of God.' Be that all as it may, the story of the crucifixion in itself is sufficient to deny the miracles Jesus is said to have performed and to deny that he was God.

Clearly no man ever lived of whom the fantastic stories in the Gospel could be said to be a true and correct description. Jesus

Christ was either a man or a myth. As history and science both deny that the stories told of him can be true, we stand on firm ground in asserting the myth theory.

Profane history, which is a sober record of events that have actually occurred, is completely silent on Jesus Christ. The only sources of information concerning him are contained in the Pauline Epistles and the Four Gospels of the New Testament. As we have already eliminated these as of no evidential value, we are left with nothing further to examine other than the alleged references to Jesus by Jewish and Pagan writers which religious apologists still use to influence the gullible and the ignorant.

John E. Remsburg, in *The Christ*, names forty two writers who lived within a century after the period when Jesus is alleged to have existed. From all of their considerable writings, only four passages can be found that might possibly support the case for the historist. The passages (or interpolations) are from the writings of the Jewish historian, Josephus, and the three Roman writers, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, and Suetonius. But of the four passages, not a single one can withstand a critical test.

It is generally agreed that the strongest of them is the passage which suddenly and irrelevantly interrupts the narrative of a Jewish uprising, described in *Jewish Antiquities*, xviii, 3, 3, a classical work written by Flavius Josephus late in the first century. This passage is as follows:

> 'Now about this time there arose Jesus, a wise man, if indeed, he may be called a man. For he was a doer of marvelous acts, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with delight. And he won himself over many Jews and many also of the Greek nation. He was the Christ. And when on the indictment of the principal men among us, Pilate had sentenced him to the cross, those who before had loved him did not cease to do so. For he appeared to them on the third day alive again, the divinely inspired prophets having foretold these and ten thousand other things concerned with him. And until now the race of Christians so named after him, is not extinct.'

Josephus, born some years after the alleged death of Jesus was an extremely pious and proud Jew, a point that must be kept in mind in view of the passage attributed to him, depicting Jesus as the long awaited Messiah. The Jews at that particular time were bestowing great attention on matters pertaining to the coming of the Messiah. In fact, they were waiting with painful patience and desperate hope for the Messiah who was to bring peace and happiness to all those

suffering under the cruel Roman heel. Surely Josephus, who worked with such careful sequence, would not suddenly break the unity of his narrative to observe the coming of Jesus the Messiah without proceeding to elaborate on it and impress its significance upon his religious brethren. The writer of the passage could only be a Christian. Certainly not a Jew.

Perhaps the most important and illuminating fact, however, is that the passage is not found in the early copies of Josephus. Not until the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius (about 320 C.E.–Christian Era) do we come across it. It is worthless as historical material because of the deliberate falsifications of the wily Eusebius, who has long been recognized as 'the first thoroughly dishonest historian of antiquity.' It is Eusebius who is generally acknowledged as the one who forged the absonant passage.

The Christian writer, Archdeacon Farrar, in his *Life of Christ*, volume i, 63, sums up the case in the following words: 'The single passage in which Josephus alludes to him is interpolated, if not entirely spurious.' While the freethought scholar, Herbert Cutner, in his work, *Jesus, God, Man or Myth?*, trenchantly states, 'The whole paragraph shrieks forgery, it aroused the most scathing contempt from Gibbon, and most Christian theologians, thoroughly ashamed of its unmitigated imposture, have denounced it in no unmeasured terms. They did so because in their day the question of the existence of Jesus was never seriously raised.'

In this second half of the twentieth century, it is significant that we now find the Christian apologists thoroughly alarmed at the ever increasing influence the mythicist is exercising upon unprejudiced persons. Ignoring the rejection of the passage in Josephus by their own authorities in the past, they now, devoid of scruples, present Josephus as the supreme historical witness for Jesus. That is, of course, when the opportunity to do so unchallenged presents itself.

The first of the pagan 'witnesses' previously mentioned is the early Roman historian, Tacitus. In his celebrated *Annals*, written early in the second century, he refers to the burning of Rome in 64 C.E., and the Neronian persecution of the 'Christiani' for having caused it. He describes them as a 'vast multitude' and says the cult was founded by Christus, who was punished as a criminal by the Procurator Pontius Pilate.

We can be certain that the number of Christians (as we understand the term) in Rome, at that time, was quite small, anything but a 'vast multitude.' The city did however contain large numbers of Messianic Jews, and the only term a Roman could apply to a devotee

of a Messiah was 'Christianus.' It is clear therefore that Tacitus confused the two and never investigated the history of Christianity, much less its origin.

Eusebius, who made a list of all the alleged Jewish and pagan references to Christianity, strangely but significantly makes no mention of the passage *or of Tacitus himself*! Let us here remember that it is this same Eusebius to whom we are indebted for almost all we know of the history of Christianity down to the time of Constantine. He was a writer whose historical honesty was not without reproach. Indeed, he himself confessed that he had related only such matters as would redound to the glory of religion, and had suppressed all that would tend to its discredit. The dubious passage is further damned by the fact that it was not quoted by any Christian writer before the fifteenth century.

Pliny the Younger, Proconsul of the province of Bithynia, in Asia Minor, wrote a letter to the Roman emperor Trajan (C.E. 113) in which he reported the presence in his province of Christians who, at daybreak on a fixed day, sang hymns to 'Christus as if he were a God.' (So have many other votaries, to many other gods, but no one thinks of them as historical persons!) The letter is of small moment, as it neither proves nor disproves the historicity of Jesus.

The Roman historian Suetonius, a contemporary of Pliny and Tacitus, relates in his *Life of Claudius*, how the emperor expelled the Jews from Rome because 'at the instigation of one Chrestus' they were continually making disturbances. This is said to have taken place about fifteen years after the alleged crucifixion of Jesus; therefore it can be assumed that this Chrestus, whoever he may have been, was a Jew.

It is of more than passing interest that the name 'Chrestus' (good) was common in Rome. 'Christus' is Graeco-Latin for Messiah. (It is also a name of the god Serapis of Egypt). It is possible therefore that the riots recorded by Suetonius could have arisen from disputes as to the nature of the Messiah, and that Suetonius may not have clearly understood the matter.

Summing up, it is apparent that, even if the foregoing passages were authentic and derived from earlier sources, they would not carry us back earlier than the period in which the Gospel legend took form, and so could only attest the legend of Jesus and thus negate his historicity.

Before concluding the scrutiny of Jewish and pagan documents, we must not overlook the rabbinical writers of the Talmud. The fact that these writers had no independent knowledge of Jesus, proved

by the way they confounded him with various Jesuses whose adventures were known. One of these, Jesus ben Pandira, a reputed wonder-worker, is said to have been stone to death (and hanged on a tree, not crucified) in the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (106-79 B.C.) at Jerusalem. Another, Jesus ben Stada, whose date is uncertain, is alleged to have possessed great occult power and could travel by flying (unaided!). He also is said to have been stoned and hanged, not in Jerusalem, but at Lydda.

The great rabbinical scholar Israel Levi however, tells us that the notions about Jesus that are to be found in the Talmud are 'only the reflection in Jewish circles of the Christian documents.'

The paucity of information concerning the Christian saviour is graphically expressed by Robert Keable in *The Great Galilean.* 'No man,' he says, 'knows sufficient of the early life of Jesus to write a biography of him.' For that matter, no one knows enough for the normal *Times* obituary notice of a great man. If regard were to be had to what we should call, in correct speech, definitely historical facts, scarcely three lines could be filled. Moreover, if newspapers had been in existence, and if that obituary notice had had to be written in the year of his death, no editor could have found in the literature of his day so much as his name. Yet few periods of the ancient world were so well documented as the period of Augustus and Tiberius. But no contempory knew of his existence.

In accounting for the story of Christ, whether pursued historically, literally, or philologically, it will be found to be simply a Greek version of a recurring legend dating back to the Sanskrit dramatised and staged generally over Europe during the Middle Ages and continued in this day in the passion plays.

Jesus, like all gods of old, is gone, and there is no evidence or reason for supposing that he was ever any more of a reality than his countless predecessors."

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Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 48-April 28, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

QUOTATIONS ON RELIGION

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I think that I have some quotations here which will interest you very much. This is, really, what great men think about religion. Let's start out with Albert Einstein who first said, "I am convinced that some political and social activities and practices of the Catholic organizations are detrimental and even dangerous for the community as a whole, here and everywhere. I mention here only the fight against birth control at a time when overpopulation in various countries has become a serious threat to the health of people and a grave obstacle to any attempt to organize peace on this planet. (Letter to a reader of the *Brooklyn Tablet*, who questioned Dr. Einstein if he had been correctly quoted, 1954).

"I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own—a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. Neither can I believe that the individual survives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear or ridiculous egotism. (In the *New York Times* Obituary as a quotation, April 19, 1955).

"The religious geniuses of all ages have been distinguished by this kind of religious feeling, which knows no dogma and no God conceived in man's image; so that there can be no church whose central teachings are based on it. Hence it is precisely among the heretics of every age that we find men who were filled with this highest kind of religious feeling and were in many cases regarded by their contemporaries as Atheists, sometimes also as saints. (From the *New York Times*, Magazine Section, "Religion and Science," November 9, 1930).

Now, how about Napoleon. "How can you have order in a state without religion? For, when one man is dying of hunger near another who is ill of surfeit (too much), he cannot resign himself to this difference unless there is an authority which declares, 'God wills

it thus.' Religion is excellent stuff for keeping people quiet." (In the old *American Freeman* magazine).

"All religions have been made by men." (In a letter to Gourgaud, January 28, 1817). "A nation must have religion, and that religion must be under the control of the government." (In a letter to Count Thidaubeau, June, 1801). And when questioned on his religion: "I am neither an Atheist nor a rationalist; I do believe in God and am of the religion of my father. I was born a Catholic, and will fulfill all the duties of that church." (at St. Helena, April 18, 1821).

How about Thomas Alva Edison? "So far as religion of the day is concerned, it is a damned fake. Religion is all bunk. My mind is incapable of conceiving such a thing as a soul. I may be in error, and man may have a soul, but I simply do not believe it." (in *Do We Live Again?*, an essay).

Or let's take Theodore Dreiser: "If I were personally to define religion, I would say that it is a bandage that man has invented to protect a soul made bloody by circumstances. All forms of dogmatic religion should go. The world did without them in the past and can do so again. I cite the great civilizations of China and India." (Press interview, March, 1941).

Or, let's peek in on Thomas Jefferson: "Millions of innocent men, women and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced an inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half the world fools and the other half hypocrites; to support roguery and error all over the world. (In *Autobiography*, in a reference to the Virginia Act for Religious Freedom).

But then, often, we don't like to have certain people on our side–yet, we are honest enough to admit that they are there. What did Adolph Hitler say? "The New Testament is a Jewish swindle on the part of the four Evangelists because the teaching is copied exactly from the Indian belief in Jischnu Christa," and, "Christianity is a religion for slaves and fools." (Both cited by John Gunther in *The Nation*). Yet he knew how to handle the whole thing. "The religions are all alike, no matter what they call themselves. They have no future–certainly none for Germans. Fascism, if it likes, may come to terms with the church. So shall I. Why not?" (From Dr. Herman Rauschning's *The Voice of Destruction. Hitler Speaks*).

And then, just jumping back and forth at random, let's go to Benjamin Franklin. "When a religion is good, I conceive it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it so that its professor are obliged to call for

help of civil powers, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of it's being a bad one." (In *Works*, Vol. XIII, page 506). "I wish it [Christianity] were more productive of good works . . . I mean really good works . . . not holy-day keeping, sermon-hearing . . . or making long prayers filled with flatteries and compliments despised by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity." *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, page 75).

Or, as H.L. Mencken put it succinctly, "I believe that religion, generally speaking, has been a curse to mankind." (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, September 11, 1955). But then, in an elaboration of this, he said, "Faith may be defined briefly as an illogical belief in the occurrence of the improbable." *(Ibid.)*

Clarence Darrow, the most famous criminal lawyer America ever had, summed everything up like this: "I don't believe in God because I don't believe in Mother Goose." (In a speech at Toronto, Ontario, Canada in 1930). And later, "I say that religion is the belief in future life and in God; I don't believe in either." (Interview with the *New York Times*, April 19, 1936).

And Samuel Longhorne Clemens, whom you all know as Mark Twain, in his *Notebook* of 1935 merely stated, "If Christ were here now, there is one thing he would not be—a Christian."

And somewhere along the way, President James A. Garfield addressed the Congress of the United States and had this to say, "The divorce between church and state ought to be absolute. It ought to be absolute. It ought to be so absolute that no church property anywhere, in any state, or in any nation, should be exempt from taxation, for if you exempt the church property of any church organization, to that extent you impose tax upon the whole community."

And he was not alone, for President Ulysses S. Grant, as early as 1875, proposed a constitutional amendment to provide that "all church property shall bear its proportion of taxation."

Always people have their own opinions. St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, in *Exercita Spiritualia,* written in 1541, states simply, "We should always be disposed to believe that what appears white is really black, if the hierarchy of the Church so decides."

And it is like Lucretius, Roman poet circa 96-55 B.C., says in *De Rerum Natura*, (57 B.C.): "How many evils have flowed from religion." And that was before Christianity was even born.

So American patriots and pamphleteers had to take up the cudgel about the time of our nation's birth to say, as did James Otis (1725–1783) in *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and*

Proved, (1764): "Kingcraft and priest have fell out so often, that 'tis a wonder this grand and ancient alliance is not broken off forever. Happy for mankind will it be when such a separation shall take place."

Thomas Paine was *the* pamphleteer of all time, and let us look at a few of his quotes, all in *The Age of Reason.*

"I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church." "I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy," for "Any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child, cannot be said to be a true system." "All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit." For, "whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and tortuous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveness with which more than half the Bible is filled, it would be more consistent that we call it the word of a demon than the word of God. It is a history of wickedness that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind."

Our single greatest jurist was Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, when confronted as an Atheist, replied, "I can't help an occasional semi-shudder as I remember that millions of intelligent men think that I am barred from the face of God unless I change. But how can one pretend to believe what seems to him childish and devoid alike of historical and rational foundations?" (This is quoted from a book review by Holmes for the book review section of *Time*).

And in a letter to Lady Pollack he stated, "On the whole, I am on the side of the unregenerate who affirm(s) the worth of life as an end in itself, as against the saints, who deny it."

Oliver Wendall Holmes, Sr., the American poet, and father of the jurist, was just as blunt when he said without equivocation, "The Pope put his foot on the neck of kings, but Calvin and his cohorts crushed the whole human race under their heels in the name of the Lord of Hosts." (In an address to the Massachusetts Medical Society, May 30, 1860). And then he went on to say, "Rough work, iconoclasm, but the only way to get at the truth."

Ben N. Lindsey, another famous American jurist, put his finger on it nicely when he noted (in *The Revolt of Modern Youth*, 1925): "The churches used to win their arguments against Atheism, agnosti-

cism, and other burning issues by burning the ismists, which is fine proof that there is a devil, but hardly evidence that there is a God."

It's all a matter of opinion, isn't it? We have ours. You have yours. And we have given you some opinions of third parties here tonight.

This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the separation of church and state. Your contributions are welcomed to help us to continue these broadcasts here, and in other cities. You may send them, and your comments, to P. O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. That is, Society of Separationists, P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767.

I shall be back again next week, same day of the week, same station, same time. Meanwhile, thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 49—May 5, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

RELIGIOUS STRIFE

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

There are many reasons for fighting between peoples. I recently had to survey the world in this respect to this idea for a speech I needed to give at Rice University. I was appalled. Of course there are economic reasons, political reasons, power reasons, attached to all wars, but it is amazing when one realizes how large the component of religion is in these matters.

Today we have the unhappy situation of the Jew and the Moslem at each other's throat in the Middle East. In northern Ireland the violent showdown is at hand between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. In Vietnam, a Protestant nation (the United States) has intervened in a situation which began largely as a religious war between Roman Catholics and Buddhists. In Biafra, it looks like the establishment of a Roman Catholic nation there will kill off the population by starvation. The same drive to establish a French-Roman Catholic state as a part of Canada has that nation in a furor. In South America we see nations crippled in every aspect of living by a domanant Roman Catholic culture which stultifies and represses. There is a bloody war in the Sudan in Africa between the pagans and the Moslems. In Spain individual rights are completely obliterated by the dominant Roman Catholic Church. Fresh in our memory are the heartless killings by the Utashi in Yugoslavia, a wholely religious slaughter. And what can we say of the mass killing of Jews in Germany?

This is contemporary history when, in the name of a god of peace, there is slaughter we would never dream possible. Remember that the atomic bombs used in the Second World War were not dropped on the blue-eyed blonds of Germany who were good Christians. The two bombs were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima where brown-skinned pagans lived—where, if two cities of heathens were wiped out, it would not matter so much.

Has it always been like this?

I have at hand several items which were recently sent to me concerned with facets of history which are not generally touched upon. We hear much of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages, but did you know about Holland, under Diedrich Sonoy, a governor of a portion of that country at that time? He was a staunch Lutheran, and during his reign he massacred and tortured Roman Catholics and all others of any faith but Lutheranism, in a horrendous manner. I would like to take one example of the god-fearing and good, loving Protestant Dutchman's methods which will suffice to show you what happened. We have the record yet of the Roman Catholic Nanning Koppezoon who would not change his faith. He was subjected to a series of fearful tortures and when this did not accomplish the conversion, he was singed from head to foot with burning torches. His feet were flayed and he was then thrown into a dungeon for six weeks. When this did not bring him around, he was brought back to the torture room and racked. This consisted of placing him on a rack and pulling on his arms and legs until all the joints in his body were pulled apart. He was placed under a huge earthenware vessel and then Governor Sonoy had an idea! He supplied some rats to be put under that vessel with Nanning. Hot coals were heaped upon the vessel until the rats gnawed their way into the man's body to escape the heat. This was attested to by the commissioners who watched the tortures and who wrote to the governor the following, in a letter:

> "Noble, wise, virtuous and very discreet sir, we have wished to apprise you of the foregoing and now pray God Almighty may spare you in a happy, healthy and long-continued government."

The "foregoing" of which they speak in this closing paragraph is a lengthy recital of thanks for the gift of the rats and a description of the delectable enjoyment they had in watching the tortures of this man.

The holes made in Nanning's body were filled with hot coals and from then on it is not decent to describe what happened. One would have thought that this stubborn Roman Catholic would have given up and died, or welcomed death. But he was still alive and so he confessed to anything and everything. He confessed to matters he knew nothing about. He was told he would be spared. The report was sent to the governor and he ordered the man executed. Let me read to you the exact words of this Christ-filled, loving Lutheran Dutch governor:

"His heart shall be torn from his living bosom and thrown in his face, after which his head is to be taken off and exposed *on the church steeple* in his native village. His body is to be cut into four pieces and a quarter fastened upon different towers of the City of Alkamaar."

In Scotland, during the reign of the Stuarts, Presbyterians were hunted down like wild beasts and torn to pieces by hounds. Their ears were torn from their heads. Their leg bones were shattered by iron boots. Their fingers were crushed by screws. Women's breasts were either torn or cut off. Yet, when the Protestants got the upper hand, they did exactly the same thing.

In Ireland, no one could equal Cromwell and his orders. Dermid O'Hurley, archbishop of Cashel, was taken to Stephen's Green in Dublin (1538), lashed to a tree, his boots filled with combustibles, his limbs bared and smeared with alcohol and oil. Then his torturers alternately lit and extinguished the materials, prolonging his agonies for four days. When he still remained true to his faith, he finally was burned to death.

In Kilmallock, Patrick O'Hely, Bishop of Mayo, Father Cornelius, a Franciscan, and others were tortured by having their thighs broken with hammers and their arms crushed with levers.

In Ireland, Roman Catholics could hold no commissions in the army or navy, nor could they serve as common soldiers. If a Catholic child or adult attended a school kept by a Catholic he forfeited all property, present or future. No Catholic could hold or own land. To teach Catholicism was punishable by exile, which was also the penalty for being a priest.

In every instance, the persons involved claimed that only the "obstinancy of the accused" was the cause of it. This is the charge hurled against me, and against Atheists, constantly. The attackers are driven to their attacks against us because of our obstinancy.

We hear a lot about the Inquisition and the Roman Catholic Church's history in that affair, but I want to point out here today that when the church abandoned the persecution of heretics, and did tolerate Protestants, the Protestants then gaining power treated the Catholics as badly wherever they could, and everyone else, also.

In Puritan New England, the United States, Quakers were hanged, flogged half-naked through the streets, branded with a big letter "H" for heretic, bored through the tongue with a hot iron, had their ears cut off, hands amputated. The law itself gave as a criterion that the flogging with tarred ropes would be "until the flesh shall be a jelly." This was an everyday matter.

A common practice in New England was to soak a heretic in water and then tie him or her out of doors in mid-winter to freeze. Often religious dissidents were driven out of the country in America. Listen to this Massachusetts law:

> "Ordered and agreed, yt if any pson or psons wthn ye iurisdiction shall eithr openly condemne or oppose ye baptizg of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from ye ap-p'bation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart ye congregation at ye administration of ye ordinance; and shall appear to ye Co't wilfully and obstinately to continue therein after due time and means of conviction, every such pson or psons shall be sentenced to banishmt."

These people were called "Anabaptists," against baptising of infants, and they were hounded unmercifully.

As one reads the literature and the reasoning of those days, one is confounded by the modern ring to it. Listen to this clergyman:

> "It might appear as if good manners, and generosity, and magnaminity of spirit, would have kept them out of our state. Certainly, by every rule of reason and right, they ought to have kept away. They had no rights or business here."

He was talking about Quakers in Massachusetts, in the period of the formation of our nation. We constantly hear the thrilling history of freedom of religion in America. But these matters are not told.

The clergyman goes on, and he is a Harvard Ph.D. He cannot understand the "obstinancy" of these Quakers who insist upon believing other than the dominant religion.

> "Most clearly they [the Quakers] courted persecution and suffering and death . . . Those magistrates never intended harm . . . except as they believed that all their successive measures and sharper penalties were positively necessary to secure their jurisdiction from the wildest lawlessness and absolute anarchy."

When he sums it all up he is convinced:

> "It is to be frankly and positively affirmed that the Quakers were the aggressive party . . . with their dogged pertinacity. . .
> ... which drove the authorities almost to a frenzy."

One sixty-year-old women in ill health, named Elizabeth Hooten, drove the good magistrates to the following frenzy. The woman said she was a Quaker. This was her great offense. She was seized at Dover, Massachusetts, put into the stocks first, then imprisoned four days in the dead of winter, where she nearly perished from cold. Being an old woman, when she was released she went out walking

down the streets of Cambridge, exhorting the people to repentance. She was then once more arrested, and here is the actual account:

> "She was 'imprisoned in a close stinking dungeon, where there was nothing either to lie down or sit on, where she was kept two days and two nights without bread or water.'"
>
> She was then sentenced to be "whipped through three towns."
>
> "At Cambridge, she was tied to a whipping post, and lashed with ten stripes with a three-stringed whip with three knots at the end. At Watertown she was laid on with ten stripes more with rods of willow. At Dedham, in a cold frosty morning, they tortured her aged body with ten stripes more at a cart's tail."
>
> The blood and the open wounds froze in the temperature. Then:
>
> "Thus miserably torn and beaten, they carried her a weary journey on horseback many miles into the wilderness, and toward night left her there among the wolves, bears and other wild beasts. When those who conveyed her thither left her, they said, 'They thought they should never see her more.'."

There are many "moderates" in history and in contemporary times who were or are wont to argue about what is most appropriate in these situations. During the times of history I talk about here, many of the intellectuals argued that not too large a number of heretics should be burned, or killed, or maimed, or tortured, but that only some should be used as an example.

I am completely unreasonable in my approach. I am an extremist. I feel that justice obviously demands that none should have been burned at all. None should have been maimed. None should have been imprisoned. None should have been tortured. I feel that everywhere in all lands today no one should endure any repressions.

Well, I will be with you next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. I am sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a society which advocates complete separation of church and state, an educational, non-political, non-profit organization.

You may write us for a list of our publications at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. We sell booklets, tapes and records. We are very pleased to tell you that we will have a book available soon which is a text of all these programs combined into a sort of primer on Atheism and the separation of church and state. In order to have this book, because of the restrictions placed against us, and because no one wants to help us get an actual Atheist book into print, we are asembling it in Texas, having it type-set in New York, printed in Michigan, bound in Illinois, covered in Oklahoma. Won't you

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Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 50–May 12, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

CHRISTIAN MARTYRS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

There are many myths related to religion and none is more firmly embedded in the faith of the Christian than the idea of "Christian Martyrs." Indeed, those Christians who care to flatter me for reasons known only to themselves, oft say that as I have been persecuted, so were the first Christians.

In all of the surveys of history there are allusions to these martyrs. Perhaps one of the most familiar maxims of the church is the quotation: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians."

To the credit of that church, it is mainly Roman Catholic writers who have exposed the worthlessness of at least 99 per cent of the martyr stories. This all began actually way back in the seventeenth century, this expose. At that time a priest by the name of Tillemont of the Gallican Church, that is the Roman Catholic Church in France, took up the study of the martyr stories and showed them to be the clumsy forgeries that they were.

Tillemont was followed in this research by an Austrian, Roman Catholic Professor Albert Eberhard, who published *Altchrisleche Literatur*, continuing the exposure. Then the Belgian Jesuit Father Delehaye set to and completed over one hundred books on the subject. When just one of these was translated into English, it so shook up the British and American churches that the other ninety nine never were translated, and in 1907 Pope Pius X put his foot down on any further publications.

Now, anyone can read these books, if he can read either French or German, or can afford the trip to those countries in order to try to uncover extant copies of the works. *No American priest has ever had any part in this work.* Curiously, the Protestants want nothing of it, for they prefer to cling to the idea of "Christian Martyrs."

Therefore, some of these old stories, and fabrications, still appear in encyclopedias of religion in America, and even in Catholic ency-

clopedias here.

Let's look at some of these. The most famous collection of lives of martyrs is known as the Bollandist collection and describes about twenty five thousand martyrs. That collection does not include the batches of ten and twenty thousand martyrs at one fell swoop which were described in some of the earlier literatures. Most of the immense crowds of martyrs are quietly discounted because scholars know that these are merely fantastic tales. But there are certain stories so romantic and so compelling that the churches make rather unscrupulous and pious attempts to save them.

One of these is the legend of the butchering of "Ursula" and ten thousand virgins at Cologne about the year 300. The only thing wrong with the story is that it never happened. Another one deals with the town of Agareman in Switzerland where there was to have occurred a massacre of five thousand soldiers—an entire legion (the Theban Legion)—of the Roman army. Even in interpreting the fairy tale, however, the church notes that it was not really a whole legion (4,000 to 6,000 troops), but most probably a vexillatic (which means, when translated, a troop), and this was usually composed of about fifty men or less.

This story is particularly curious because in every tale of early Christianity is the theme that the Christians refused to become a part of the Roman legions. They were, in fact, draft dodgers *par excellence*, and the reason that they had any difficulty with Rome was because they did refuse to serve in the legions.

This does not stop the stories, however, for there is the legend of the Thundering Legion, also. And this Legion, like the one at Agareman, was also composed only of Christians. They were in a tough position and were without water, so they prayed to their Christian god and a thunder and rain storm ensued. This ignores the fact that there was a "Thundering Legion" in the Roman legions, long before Christianity was even thought about, and this legion carried a standard or flag on which a thunderbolt was represented, for a pagan god is said to have once saved their legion in the same wise.

Actually experts in Roman Catholic history reject most or all of these tales because they are supposed to be contemporary reports of the trials and martyrdoms, but are so filled with fantastic blunders in chronology, topography and details of Roman court practices that they fall from internal inconsistencies in the telling. They represent the Romans as using methods of torture and execution which were unknown in the ancient codes or practices.

Good Christians are roasted on gridirons, stripped naked and

burned alive, used as torches to light the arenas at night, shot with arrows, broken on wheels, and so on. The sociological studies of the customs and practices of these diverse cultures reveal that the accounts were inceptive of the medieval Dark Age time continuum.

It is now acknowledged in real historical research done by European Roman Catholics that there were only two general persecutions of Christians in the 249 years from Nero to the peace, besides persecution in Rome under Nero and Domitian, and local outbreaks at times in the provinces.

Let's look at these so-called "persecutions." The one under Decius lasted only a few months and that under Maximian or Diocletian less than ten years. Both of these were under the Roman law which forbade "non-licensed" religions. Under Decius there are records of six Christians who met their death in Rome, using the most lenient tests in examining the claims of the so-called Christians at that time. Origen, one of the most learned of the early Christians, lived and worked at this time. In his work on Celsus (I, 46), he says that he knew of many coverts to the faith. Yet curiously this reference is used by many Christians as saying that there had been "an abundance of Christian martyrs." Read Origen. He says nothing of the kind. In fact, in his Book III, 8, he says, and I quote,"[Christian martyrs] had been few and easy to count," after nearly two hundred years of Christian history. He goes on to say that the remarkable fewness of the Christians whom the authorities had been compelled to execute shows that at that time the Christians were orderly and law abiding.

As we delve into this ancient literature, we find that the catacombs were merely cemeteries of the Christians in the later days of peace, and that all the malarkey about Christians huddling in the catacombs with sentinels at the entrances waiting for soldiers is bunk.

I may add that I have personally inspected the major catacombs in Rome. There is no evidence, and indeed no claims made, that they were used as meeting places. Because of their nature it would have been impossible. Each corridor is only wide enough to walk through. In none of them could two people be abreast. The small cells which have been enlarged to make into burial slots can accommodate no more than the workmen who would handle the bodies and the small coffins, swinging them around in order to put them in their places. It can only be presumed that this curious method of burial was to preserve the bodies for their final arising. They were well known sites and could easily have been decimated by the Romans had they

cared to do this.

Monseigneur Duchesne, a chief authority on the early church, says that he has examined the claims of martyrs to these so-called persecution and finds not quite a score of genuine cases. (A score is twenty). This is a far cry from the ten or twenty thousand at one swoop with which I opened this discussion tonight.

It then becomes imperative to find out what is meant by martyrdom, and although I am not an expert in the field of languages, I yield to common sense in the interpretation of languages by others. I am told by linguists that the Greek word "martys" means "witness," and that it is used throughout the New Testament as a verb "martyred" meaning "bore witness" to something, or publicly proclaiming something. And as I wade through the dictionary now, I see that this was the original meaning of the word in Greek. So that the original Christian martyrs were persons who openly said that they were Christians, and then, of course, we can arrive at some estimated figures. And the best figures which the church can give are that they were about twenty thousand in number in Rome during the times in question: people who martyred, or witnessed, to their "Faith", and we see now why that particular sect in America which calls itself by that name does insist on being "Jehovah's Witnesses."

In summing this up then, we find that there were no great numbers of Christians who fought and died for their faith, or who were martyrs in those far off times when Christianity was coming to birth. Instead, this was a small group, which was orderly, which suffered at the most about twenty losses of life in about two hundred fifty (or more) years. We see that the most colossal lies have been erected in relationship to this period, in order to enhance the mystery and the inception of this faith into public life. Well, all this derring-do, all this folderol, is much more exciting and dramatic than just a dull old orderly procession of a beginning faith counter to the faith of pagan religion generally then in vogue.

And, as Christian faith knows that the persecutions of its own churches killed more persons in persecutions, riots, heresy hunts, schism, inquisitions, Crusades, wars and missionary efforts than any church or any other "faith" in the history of man, it is important to gloss over those killings and instead, to speak of their own martyrs, of which there were only a few—or none.

All Atheists believe that even one person killed for religious reasons is one person too many. But then, we are fanatics about the right to live, to live peacefully, and to live fully, a right which has not yet been established for or by man.

We cannot leave this subject, however, without saying a few words on the "martyrdom of Peter." According to legend, Peter came to Rome, established the church, was crucified head-downward, and thus died a martyr's death. The difficulty here again is that nothing of the sort ever happened. This legend came primarily from the forged "Acts of Sts. Peter and Paul," a fabrication of the fourth century. When the historians of the church dig into "proof" of Peter's death, they cite Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth; Iranaeus, Bishop of Lyons; Clement, Bishop of Alexandria; Origen and Tertullian. All of them wrote from one hundred fifty to two hundred years after the fact. What is actually said is as follows:

Clement of Alexandria: " . . . after Peter had announced the word of God . . . in Rome . . . the hearers requested Mark to write down . . . what had . . been . . . preached."

Origen: No reference at all.

Tertullian: "How fortunate is this church for which . . . where Peter has emulated the Passion of the Lord."

Irenaeus: "The church . . . founded in Rome by the . . . most glorious . . . Peter."

Dionysius: " . . . and taught in Italy . . . and about the same time suffered (the Greek word "to bear") martyrdom (the Greek word for "witness")."

In other words, all five church authorities at the most only say that Peter was a witness to his faith, or bore witness to his faith—not a word of being what we call a martyr today.

We hope that someday the Christian community will report properly on its own history.

Meanwhile I will be back next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. I am sponsored by the Society of Separationists, a non-profit, non-political, educational organization. Write to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, for a list of the booklets, tapes and records and other material which we sell. And, please send us your gift so that we may continue our broadcasting.

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Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 51—May 19, 1969
KTBC Radio—Austin, Texas

THE ETHICS OF JESUS

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

When our country was being founded, religious persons in the State of Virginia actively sought government aid for religion by actually introducing before the Assembly of that state a measure to levy a tax for the support of all Christian denominations. The proposal was defeated in 1779. It was offered again in 1784.

When it was, it aroused James Madison to write his famous "A Memorial and Remonstance," and Thomas Jefferson to write his famous "Statute of Religious Freedom." So aroused were people in those days that there should not be taxation for support of religion, that from this there came a culmination in the adoption of the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution of the United States.

I have in front of me that first bill which demanded money for the teachers of the Christian religion from the taxpayers of that day and age. The first sentence of it is a declaration that the church has made for all the years of its existence. Let me quote it to you.

> "Whereas the general diffusion of Christian knowledge hath a natural tendency to correct the morals of men, restrain their vices and preserve the peace of society . . . ."

I have heard so much about Christian morals that I decided I would try to find out what they are, as outlined by Jesus Christ in his words and actions in the New Testament. What are the ethics of Jesus Christ? In order to determine these I have used the synoptic gospels of the New Testament as laboriously scrutinized and classified by a lecturer at Oxford University, England: Richard Robinson.

The New Testament has been interpreted so often, in so many countries, that it is important to divest ourselves of the elements of these previous interpretations and to look at that recitation of the thoughts, ideas and deeds of Jesus Christ in an entirely new, scientific and rational light.

What the synoptics are mainly concerned to do is to tell a story,

the story of the wonderful life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. In this telling, his life as a leader and teacher is depicted and we must analyze what we can. Professor Robinson did this in the original Greek language, attempting to steep himself in the exact meaning of the authors. His findings are as follows:

The writings of the New Testament, specifically the Synoptic Gospels, are by no means wholly, or even primarily, concerned with ethical teaching, that is, telling us what things are good and what acts should be done.

Jesus is neither a moralist, nor a teacher primarily, but a mysterious and miraculous divine leader. He does occupy himself with certain ethical teaching according (especially) to Matthew.

To view it: in the first place it is quite unsystematic. There is nothing like a treatise, or a methodical list, such as the two lists of the two different Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. The teaching consists of separate and independent sayings. There is no mention of how precepts and valuations are to be co-ordinated. In two cases there is a reference to the greatest commandment and then to the second. We will get to those later.

A great deal of the teaching is vague, puzzling and obscure. Much of it consists of fascinating but mysterious stories whose point is doubtful. One does not know–and it is freely open to interpretation–as to what could have been meant by "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Actually some of the direct exhortations are very uncertain in meaning. What is to be the interpretation of "Blessed are the pure in heart"? What is purity in heart? When we try to elucidate by comparing other parts of the texts, owing to their fragmentary or atomic character, this cannot be done. When we turn to other writers to find out what they think is meant, we can get an interpretation such as from other old Jewish writings–for example, "Do not tell my gospel to anyone who is not a Jew."

There are some very general precepts on which great emphasis is laid; some discussion of middling matters; some small change of moral advice, but the teaching is paradoxial and may have been intended to be so. The one underlying element seems to be that the statements had the intent of shocking the hearers of that day and age. Jesus is given to sayings such as "The last shall be first; and the first shall be last,"–just as if to say that the governor of our state should, or ought to, change places with say–a garbage collector. The idea is as shocking to many now as it was then. Many people are still scandalized by the saying that "Whosoever hath, to him shall be

given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

The teaching has a prominent strain of harshness in it. Jesus threatens weeping and gnashing of teeth. He threatens anyone who does not receive his missionaries with great misery. He threatens damnation to those who do not believe in his gospel. He threatens who blasphemes against the holy ghost. He is remarkably abusive. He harshly neglects his family relations. He expects his gospel to result in parricide (the death of close relatives) and in the betraying of brothers and children to death. He withers a fig-tree and destroys a herd of swine.

There are, however, five main commandments which appear. De votion to god appears to be the main one. This is a devotion to piety, a fulfillment of the religous obligation to propitiate god through our thoughts and actions. Jesus stresses this over and over again, citing that it will bring strife, the sword, the denial of family claims, disapproval of others, poverty, with no thought of tomorrow at any level. He does not advocate making of one's self materially secure. As a complete substitute for prudent action, he recommends improvidence and a reliance upon prayer and faith.

Very closely related to this first idea is Jesus' insistence that everyone must "Believe in me." Usually this appears to be that one should believe in him as being "the annointed" or the "son of man" or the "son of god." Although he is reluctant to say these things of himself, he tries to get others to utter these opinions of him. All of the notion of faith in the Synoptic Gospels appears to cluster around this idea of "believing on him," as the son of god.

The third precept is the love of man, and coupled with that is the precept that this love is so extended as to entail non-resistance to evil, love of the enemy who harms you.

In connection with these two latter precepts, they are both contradictory to the first in view of Jesus' overwhelming insistence on the priority of the law of piety. We cannot give material help to our neighbors because the law of piety demands improvidence and poverty. We cannot take family love very seriously, because it may interfere with our devotions. Coupled still further with the first law of piety is the last precept of Jesus that demands that we humiliate and lower ourselves, at all times and at all costs. While we engage in these, there is something which is nubulously termed "purity in heart" which means that the laws are to be maintained externally, yes, but internally as well. For instance, Jesus repudiates ritual and ritual laws as existing for their own sake, but sees these as being an

extension of the internal condition of the supplicant. If we condense this we find that the five major precepts are: love god, believe in me, love man, be pure in heart, be humble. So that the greatest virtues are piety, faith, love, purity and humility.

The only great good beyond these virtues is god and Jesus. Jesus has no arguments in favor of these ideas, but he has several brief reasons for them, plain matters on the one hand of threat and on the other of promise.

The two are: *Promise*, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and your reward is in heaven and *Threat*, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who are not either obedient or in agreement with his terms.

There are certain ideas which are prominent in every age of man which are curiously missing, conspicuously absent, from the ideas of Jesus. The ideal of beauty is wholly absent, and ignored. The ideal of truth and knowledge is not alone absent, but on the contrary, a target of contempt. He never recommended the use of reason at any level. The virtues of conscientiousness or respect for the moral law offends Jesus rather than pleases him as he condemns and rails against the Pharisees.

Jesus never touches any social question except divorce. He does not pronounce on war, capital punishment, gambling, justice, the administration of law, the distribution of any abundance, equality of sex, equality of color, tyranny, freedom, slavery, self-determination, or even on sex. He is against divorce and speaks of adultery as a vice, but in the story of the woman taken in adultery he preaches a humane and forgiving attitude toward the "sexual error" of adultery.

Professor Robinson feels that we must judge these values which are taught. But first he points out that there are certain inconsistencies which destroy the value of the ideas at the outset. For, while Jesus insists that god should be recognized and revered, while all others remain humble, nonetheless he insisted on his own recognition as god, in his own divinity, thus setting a peculiarly bad example. While he asked others to love their enemy and forgive, he threatened unforgiving damnation to those who disbelieved what he had to say. While he preached love, he showed himself as an unloving, threatening, destructive divinity.

And when we come to what is popularly called the "nitty gritty" of it, we find that Jesus asks people to obey his precept because it is prudent to do so, not moral to do so, for if you don't obey, hell awaits you—so it is prudent to obey. This is the exact evil he projects in "purity of heart." If the outward form of conduct is motivated by

the inward impure desire to get to heaven, instead of recognition of the intrinsic value of our acts, then neither we, nor Jesus, are pure of heart.

The other religions and moral systems which called upon man to act in respect to others in a certain way did not appear to attach to their admonitions the piety, or humility, associated with the Christ idea. Let me give you some of their golden rules:

Mohammedanism: No one is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

Buddhism: Do not hurt others in ways that you would be hurtful to yourself.

Taoism: Regard your neighbor's gain as your own and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.

Sikhism: As you deem yourself, so deem others.

Jainism: In happiness as in suffering, in joy as in grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard ourselves. We should therefore refrain from inflicting on others such injury as would appear undesirable to us if inflicted on ourselves.

Hinduism : This is the quintessence of duty: Do not do to others which would cause pain if done to you.

Confucianism: Is there one rule which ought to be acted upon throughout one's whole life? Surely it is the rule of loving kindness: Do not do to others what you would not have done by them to you.

Zoroastrianism: That nature is good when it shall not do to another whatever is not good for its own self.

With this rule of conduct being ancient, before Jesus was born, it is no original thought with him, and indeed, transcends his ethical design when he is insistent upon its violation.

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We are attempting to explore ideas of religion, history of religion, philosophy of religion, literature of religion, with particular emphasis on that religion with which you are most acquainted in western culture: Christianity. We can expand our program by contributions from you, or from your purchase of our booklets, tapes and records. You can gain information on all of these activities by writing to us at P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas.

Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

Program 52–May 26, 1969
KTBC Radio–Austin, Texas

WITCHES

GOOD evening. This is Madalyn Murray O'Hair, American Atheist, back to talk with you again.

I received a curious book in the mails today. It is written by one Augustus Jacobson, published in Chicago in 1881, by a now defunct publishing house and titled *Why I Do Not Believe.* There have been many of these books published in America, and we are trying to collect them all, despite the fact that many of them are quite extraordinary and poor literature.

This one intrigued me because it recounted two events which had occurred in the year prior to the writing of the book which is indicated as one year before publication, or 1880. The author quotes from Chicago newspaper reports at that time, two of which are quite curious. It seems that in 1879 in Russia, Agrafena Ignatief was shut up in her own house and burned alive by the peasants of Zrochcheff, because they thought she was a witch! At the trial of the peasants for burning the supposed witch, Katharina Ivanora testified that she had been bewitched frequently by Agrafena, and while Katherina was yet speaking on the witness stand, the church bells mysteriously began to ring and Katharina fell down in a fit. This was taken to be evident and unquestionable manifestation of supernatural power and had a great effect upon the judges who tried the case.

At the same time in America, in 1880, the Seminole and Creek Indians were very excited by the belief that their cattle and swine had been bewitched. The Seminoles tried and condemned a Negress for practicing the black art upon their animals and, but for the intervention of the United States Marshal, would have hanged her.

We still follow some of the old and famous Blackstone Commentaries on the Law of England, and prior to all this above, he had pronounced that a man who does not believe in witchcraft is "not to be reasoned with." This intrigues me because my grandparents were young people at the time all of this happened. They already had some children. My mother was born just about ten years later. When

I was very young, my mother told me many tales of witches and the black arts and said that once she had heard a part of a black mass but could only remember one phrase of it concerned with, "Go, ye walking devils, and hellish hosts!" I think that perhaps my mother believed in witches when she was young, and may have derived this belief from her partents, so close are we yet to the liberation of our minds from the grossest errors.

Worry about witches and witchcraft looms large in the Bible. The one that has caused more women to die than any other Bible citation is the law of Moses set out in *Exodus* 22:18, wherein the categorical command is made to all: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." *Deuteronomy* 18:10 repeats that, "There shall not be found among you . . . a witch." for this is "an abomination unto the Lord." *II Kings* 9:22 worries about Jezebel and her witchcrafts. In *II Chronicles* 33:6 Manasseh uses witchcraft, to the consternation of god. *Micah* 5:12 has the lord again threatening to "get" witches in the future. One of the reasons for the wrath of the lord against the city of Ninevah was that therein were mistresses of witchcraft, as related in *Nahum* 3:4. In *I Samuel* 15:23 the word of Samuel is that rebellion is as heinous a sin as witchcraft. The condemnation of witchcraft extends into the New Testament with the assurance that those who cannot inherit the kingdom of god are those who engage in witchcraft. (*Galatians* 5:20).

Right now in America the idea of witches and wtichcraft again is gaining credence. The cinema *Rosemary's Baby* gave it a thrust anew and, of course, we have in America the phenomena of Sybil Leak, a bona fide witch who was born in England but has come to America to live. She appears often on television and I have enjoyed the pleasure of her company several times in hotel rooms as we waited for our respective performances at diverse television stations. A quite popular television series, *Bewitched*, gives the idea of witchcraft a pixie quality, and tends to show the foolishness of the idea.

Except for Miss Leak who claims that all her ancestors were witches and that she is a bona fide witch, we have no material available at all from the viewpoint of the witch. Most of the tracts available consist of trial transcripts or reports when witches were tried or examined, or are learned accumulations of material from very religious writers who set out to prove that the witch is a nefarious anti-Christ.

The estimates of the number of persons slaughtered as witches, mostly women, vary with every author. Over the history of Christianity, the number is staggering by any method of count. One fairly

accurate estimate based on court and other records indicates that in the three advanced and civilized countries of the world, executions for witchcraft in England have been about 30,000; in France, about 75,000; and in Germany, 100,000. This has nothing to do with all the people made miserable by trials, who were not executed, or the lives ruined in the examinations of those days.

The investigation of the phenomena and history of witchcraft has produced treatment of the subject which is unworthy, unscholarly, reprehensible and dishonest. The most "objective" study I have been able to obtain states that "however loathly the disease, the doctor must not hesitate to diagnose and probe," and then goes on to indict witchcraft as being even more loathesome before the investigation begins. The women involved are described as crones and hags. From an attempted earnest beginning study of witches–and with the material at hand I may never get beyond a beginning study –it becomes clear that witchcraft was an anti-Christian movement and that women led the fight. Beyond this, very little can actually be said, although I can here give a rough outline of the propaganda extant against this original force.

The person who has translated most of the material about witchcraft, *and who has edited it*, (which is most important) was Reverend Montague Summers, and his editing of the materials extant of the original witch theories and ideas has this to say:

> I have endeavored to show the witch as she really was: an evil liver; a social pest and parasite; a devotee of a loathly and obscene creed; an adept at poisoning, blackmail and other creeping crimes; a member of a powerful secret organization inimical to Church and State; a blasphemer in word and deed, swaying the villagers by terror and superstition; a charletan and a quack; a bawd; an abortionist; the dark counsellor of lewd court ladies; a minister to vice and inconceivable corruption; battening upon the filth and foulest passions of the age."

With an "objectivity" such as this, one can hardly come out with any idea of the ideology , the philosophy, the practices, the sociology, the culture or the history of witchcraft.

Although one can trace the etymology of the word "devil" back to the Greek of "one who slanders," or of "Satan" back to the Hebrew "adversary," there is rather singular controversy over the word "witch," with which the word "hag" appears to be synonymous. Does it mean "house," or "wicked," or "wise," or "diviner" or "poisoner?" It all depends on who is tracking down the term–the more religious the researcher, the more damning the invective.

Exodus 20:8 is an admonition to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," and of course the Sabbat or Sabbath is that day when the witches met. This was the "seventh day" and began at midnight after the first six days of the week. The place chosen for meeting, according to the finest authorities, either had to have a clump of trees on it, or a cross. Also, according to the finest authorities, this was not true at all. It had to be absolutely barren, or rock-like, with not a whisper of a tree, but it simply had to have water. If the water was not there, the witches dug a hole and urinated in that hole in order to simulate water.

I want to explore the beginning of it, not the corruptions of later practives, for rituals which are stylized and meaningless now once had specific meanings to them. We do know that apparently there was a ritualistic dance. There was food eaten. There was a "mass" celebrated. Now, the saying of mass originally had to do with eating. The word derives from the activity involved in eating something, or kneading, like the kneading of bread dough to eat. The wafers of the Eucharist are still of a bread-like substance. The only other special thing about witches and their Sabbat is that they arrived at the place of meeting in a mysterious manner of locomotion. This has always been related to flying, if not upon any other thing, then upon (at least) a broom.

These are the only things about those far distant ideas and practices which are really substantively clung to during all of the years of witch history. This is all that is actually known about witchcraft. At trials through the ages, over a thousand years or more, witches were badgered into saying any number of things. There are all kinds of descriptions of variations on the mass, on the mode of travel, on the foods eaten, on the dances–particularly if they were sexual or not. We hear of herbs connected with wtiches, but that has to do apparently with the eating activity and the mass. We hear of divinations connected with witches, but that has to do with hopes for future activities.

Now, apparently a singular person appears at these Sabbats every so often. This person is always in disguise. The identity of the person is guarded. For some authorities it was the figure of a man. For other authorities it was the figure of an animal of some kind. Usually this was thought to be the devil, or Satan. And apparently this was a fallen angel. The word "angel" derives from an original idea of "messenger." the words "Devil," or "Satan," however, derive from an original idea meaning either "slanderer or adversary." Was the "messenger" a person or being who was an "adversary?" Someone

who, under cover, was fighting and especially slandering whomever had sent that first messenger? It is quite conceivable that the original devil or Satan was a woman. It is quite conceivable that this is a repeated and repeated and repeated acting out of a very important meeting, somewhere, some time in human history, when someone, sent to meet with women, stayed with them . . . and was an adversary to, or a slanderer of, the person or persons who had sent that messenger to that meeting. Or, is this the return of a woman who had been brave enough to go somewhere and come back to this group of women with the report?

Let's see what we know now: (1) By peculiar locomotion, women meet; (2) at a regularly set time, a fixed number of days; (3) the object is to meet someone in disguise who also comes; (4) there is dancing; (5) there is eating, but the witches carry nothing to this place; (6) there is an expression of gratitude that the food is there; (7) the meeting place—the site—is very important; and (8) there is a dispersal back to ordinary places in the community after this meeting.

The person in disguise does not always appear. Yet, always the over-all characteristic of the meeting is happiness. Noise is made. There is no effort, really, to hide. The only thing which is a secret is the identity of the one in disguise.

It is fascinating, but our time is up for tonight. We can continue this and speculate on it at another session.

Meanwhile, I will be back with you again next week, same day of the week, same time, same station. We are very pleased to tell you that we have concluded arrangements now to begin this program in Massachusetts also. My sponsor is the Society of Separationists, a non-proft, non-political, educational organization dedicated to the complete separation of church and state.

Please help us in our expansion of these programs by any gift possible. Our address is P.O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas. Thank you for listening, and a very good night to you.

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